Guidebook for the Ordination Process

The Episcopal Diocese of Lexington

2024

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Current Ordination Process Contacts

Offices of the Bishop
The Rev. Canon Amy Chambers Cortright, Canon to the Ordinary
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*Where items are to be submitted to the "Offices of the Bishop" or "to the Bishop", please email them to Canon Cortright. The one exception is Ember Day Letters which are to be sent directly to the Bishop (see page 16).

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A Letter from the Bishop

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble." 1 Peter 1:10

Welcome to our new guide for exploring ordained ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington.

This is a holy journey to explore God's call on your life through active listening, prayer, self-reflection, and communal conversations. All the baptized are called to minister in Christ's name, but some are set apart for a specific ministry in Holy Orders.

No doubt you have been experiencing a sense of curiosity and wonder about a vocation in ordained ministry, and now want to explore this call more deeply. Perhaps, others have encouraged you along the way and you now want to take the next step. This guide will lead you through the discernment, formation, and ordination process of the Diocese of Lexington.

Discernment is always a communal process. It began with God speaking to you, often through those who know and love you best. Now, you may be invited to enter a more formal process of conversations that involves your Faith Community in the wider Diocesan structures.

The assessment and selection of candidates for ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church examines a comprehensive set of criteria that covers Vocation, Ministry within the Episcopal Church, Spirituality, Personality and Character, Relationships, Leadership and Collaboration, Faith, Mission and Evangelism, and Quality of Mind.

This is a time-consuming journey that does not always produce the expected result. God may be calling you into a new lay ministry, or the pioneering work of a deacon, or the shepherding care of the priesthood. All are vital to the building up of the Body of Christ. You will need to be open to God's call and willing to accept the assessment of the Church catholic as you move through the process.

Above all, know that we are holding you in our prayers as you do this holy work. May the Lord shed light on your journey, give you clarity of mind, and grant you peace of heart.

Yours in Christ,

+Mark

The Right Reverend Mark Van Koevering
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington

Beginning at the Beginning
Discernment 101

All persons interested in discerning their call to ministry are invited to participate in a Discernment 101 one-hour information session offered each spring by Zoom through the Diocese of Lexington run by the Commission on Ministry. Please check with Melanie Yankey, Administrative Assistant at the Diocesan office, for details (melaniey@diolex.org).

Anyone may participate in this offering. *Nominees seeking lay licensure for Preacher, Catechist, Worship Leader, and Pastoral Leader or for the ordained vocations of deacon and priest are* ***required*** *to participate in* Discernment 101 *before engaging in those formal processes*.

Following completion of the *Discernment 101*, interested persons may follow the Guidebook for Lay Ministry (available from the Offices of the Bishop) or the Guidebook for the Ordination Process.

The following pages contain the Guidebook for the Ordination Process.

An Overview of the Ordination Process

In The Episcopal Church, when an individual senses a call to ministry, it is the community's responsibility to bear witness to that call and its fruits in the life of the individual. Discernment, particularly in this early stage, considers whether God is calling an individual to lay or ordained ministry, as well as whether the individual's gifts and strengths match the demands and challenges of leadership.

The role of the community in discernment is an important one. Whether a Nominee is discerning options for lay ministry or is sensing a call to Holy Orders, discernment is a prayerful, Spirit-led process occurring within the person's community of faith. The community helps each individual to identify their gifts for leadership and service. By this process the entire Body of Christ is broadened and strengthened.

The Commission on Ministry has prepared this document to assist individuals and their faith communities in the discernment process. This manual outlines the steps following Discernment 101 when an individual believes that they are called to ordained ministry and outlines the steps one must take from Nominee status through Postulancy, Candidacy, and Ordination.

Vocational discernment is exciting and challenging and best done prayerfully and intentionally, in community and over time. It is deeply personal and requires a great deal of time. Sometimes that timeline reaches far beyond what one might have originally expected. It is important to manage one's expectations about the amount of time that a process like this may take.

We hope that this manual provides clear guidance for those entering discernment as well as those who walk with them on this journey.

Please feel free to contact the Offices of the Bishop or the Chair of the Diocesan Commission on Ministry (COM) with any questions.

The COM is grateful to the Dioceses of Western North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Milwaukee, Western Louisiana, Washington, Texas, and the Rio Grande for their published work on discernment which we relied upon in creating this document. The Chair of COM wishes to thank the members of the Province IV COM Chairs Working Group for their help and assistance in developing a community of trust and support among its various constituent bodies that make a document like this possible.

Abbreviations

COEF Committee on Ordination Education and Formation

COM Commission on Ministry

CPE Clinical Pastoral Education

GOE General Ordination Examination

LDG Local Discernment Group

A Note to Nominees

Taking the initiative for your part of this journey is essential. Nominees are responsible for tracking their own progress against stated timelines and requirements. Completing all paperwork and assignments on time is the Nominee's responsibility throughout the entire length of one's process. If you are asked to turn something in, it is your responsibility to keep copies of each item.

Nominee Begins Formal Discernment Process

Initial Steps

Step 1: Discernment 101 information session (see Begin at the Beginning, page 7)

Step 2: Discernment continues with the process outlined in either the Guidebook for Lay Ministry or the Ordination Process Handbook (beginning with "Nominee in Conversation" below).

Nominee in Conversation

One must be a communicant in good standing and be an official member of a faith community for at least one year to begin a formal discernment process. It is critical that one is active in and known to the faith community.

Step 3: Initial Conversations between the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Regional Archdeacon and Nominee

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge (or in the absence of local ordained leadership, the Regional Archdeacon) begins an intentional, prayerful conversation with the Nominee in order to hear the Spirit's movement and God's call using the assessment tool Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry (Addendum 1).

Note: *In cases where the Archdeacon must be utilized, both the Wardens and the Offices of the Bishop must be notified first. Additional time may be needed for Step 3: Nominee in Conversation in cases where a Regional Archdeacon may not know the Nominee.*

If a faith community is in an interim period or enters an interim period after a discernment process has begun, and a permanent priest is expected to be called, the bishop may determine that a discernment process can move forward. In some cases, the bishop will "freeze" the process until the community is better able to support a discernment process. The Regional Archdeacon will oversee the process if the bishop grants permission for the process to move forward.

In cases where the bishop has granted permission for the process to move forward, a new Rector or Priest-in-Charge will take over oversight of the process once called. In these cases, a process may be extended by several months while the new priest gets to know the Nominee (or in some cases the Postulant or Candidate, when further along in the process).

In an interim period before a new priest is called, the Regional Archdeacon will oversee the discernment process.

The Commission on Ministry, in seeking to offer guidance for these conversations, provides generous latitude in how each individual explores these questions. Best practices for these conversations include the following:

- Begin and end in prayer.
- Establish an environment of trust and acceptance with the assurance that this time together is safe and sacred.
- Help the Nominee to understand that her/his/their initial call is to the process of discernment. It is through discernment that the more specific call of God will be heard and known.
- Engage in open-ended questions that prompt the Nominee to reflect upon and articulate his/her/their understanding of God's movement in his/her/their life.
- Listen to the stories/narrative the Nominee shares for evidence of the Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry.
- Structure the conversations to explore the four sections of Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry: Spiritual Vitality, Sense of Self, Relational Maturity, and Capacity to Lead. The definitions provided for each can help formulate questions to explore the corresponding quality.
- If the Nominee has not led anything in the congregation, have them develop and implement a ministry project that would involve recruiting, organizing, and leading others. This will help both the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and the Nominee gauge his/her/their capacity to lead.
- **It is important that the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon ask the hard questions and that any "red flags" are dealt with honestly and openly. Neither the Nominee nor the Church are well served when the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon avoids asking the hard questions.**
- **A note about age: mandatory retirement for clergy in The Episcopal Church is 72. While there is no 'cap' on age from the outset of the ordination process, nominees must understand that the education and formation process will take at least three years, if not longer (in some cases significantly longer) and to take that into account. The Bishop may feel that a short time frame before mandatory retirement will not allow for ordination.**
- **It is also important for nominees to understand that a minimum three-year commitment in the Diocese of Lexington following ordination and prior to retirement is required. One must also understand that no positions are guaranteed.**

The Nominee will write a spiritual autobiography to share and discuss with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon. The spiritual autobiography is an account of one's own life and one's understanding of how God has been present in various significant events and in certain significant people. Do not neglect to include important events just because they were unpleasant, e.g., illness, divorce, death of a loved one, etc. Include significant people, events, and places even if God's presence was not obvious to you at the time. See Addendum 2, A Guide for Writing a Spiritual Autobiography.

The Nominee will explore ordained ministry by interviewing a deacon and a priest, neither of whom should serve in the Nominee's congregation, and write a reflection for discussion with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon. See Addendum 3, Nominee's Interview with a Deacon and a Priest for questions to be included in the interview and the reflection questions for the

Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Nominee to discuss following the interviews.

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon is seeking evidence that the Nominee is responding to God concerning ordained ministry. Is the Nominee confusing a response to Christian service with a response to ordination? Are the Nominee's primary interests congruent with the basic function of an ordained ministry? Are the Nominee's innate abilities commensurate with the demands of ordained ministry? At the same time, the Nominee would benefit from considering the questions in Addendum 4.

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will discuss the Expected Financial Costs of Discernment, Education, and Formation (Addendum 5). Please note that this process will require in-depth sharing regarding personal finances.

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will discuss the time demands as well as the potential impact on the Nominee's family. This time commitment includes the required Clinical Pastoral Education program, which can take some time to complete. Please note that it can be difficult to quantify the time commitment for those engaging in a non-traditional course of study and formation.

The conversations between the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and the Nominee should take no less than two to three months.

If the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon believes that the Nominee's call is to lay ministry, a lay discernment mentor may be assigned by the Canon to the Ordinary at the request of the Nominee. There are resources available that may be offered to the Nominee to assist in clarifying the specific shape of his/her/their lay ministry, including the Guidebook for Lay Ministry.

If the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon affirms that the Nominee should continue in the discernment process for ordained ministry, then the following steps are taken:

- Letter of Support from Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Regional Archdeacon (Addendum 6) is completed and forwarded to the Offices of the Bishop.
- The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon completes the assessment tool Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry (Addendum 1) and forwards it to the Offices of the Bishop.
- Nominee sends the following to the Offices of the Bishop:
    - A completed Nominee Information Form (Addendum 7)
    - Nominee's spiritual autobiography (Addendum 2)
    - Nominee's reflection essay of the interviews with a priest and a deacon (Addendum 3)
    - Rector/Priest-in-Charge and Nominee request a meeting with the Bishop.

Step 4: Meet with the Bishop

The purpose of the first meeting with the Bishop is:

- To provide the Bishop with adequate information about the Nominee's life circumstances and discernment of ministry;
- To allow the Bishop to assess the adequacy of the initial conversations with the Rector/Priest-in-

Charge/Archdeacon; and
- To allow the Bishop to assess the readiness of the Nominee to continue discernment.

Following the meeting, the Bishop may invite the Nominee to
- discern various licensed lay ministries; at the request of the Nominee, a lay discernment mentor may be assigned by the Chair of the COM; OR,
- take more time for discernment and return at a later date; OR,
- continue discernment for ordained ministry and establish a Local Discernment Group (LDG).

If the Bishop approves the Nominee to continue discernment with an LDG:
- The Nominee engages a Spiritual Director (lay or ordained, other than one's own clergy) at the Nominee's expense if he/she/they are not already in direction. The Nominee may contact the Canon to the Ordinary for assistance in locating a Spiritual Director.
- The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon contacts the Chair of COM to schedule LDG training, and, utilizing A Guide for Local Discernment Groups (Addendum 8), appoints an LDG.
- **At this point in the process the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon notifies the Vestry of the status of the Nominee and the next steps involved with an LDG. The rationale is to keep the Vestry informed and to apprise them of the financial costs of discernment, education, and formation and enable them to incorporate this financial support into their budget planning. (Addendum 5)**

Step 5: Local Discernment Group

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon provides copies of A Guide for Local Discernment Groups to its members and to the Nominee (Addendum 8). Before the LDG begins its work, the LDG, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, Nominee and ideally a Vestry liaison meet with an LDG trainer from the COM for training.
- Members of the COM and the Standing Committee may not serve on an LDG.
- The Nominee provides the LDG with completed Spiritual Autobiography.
- The work of the LDG should take no less than six months.
- At any time after the six-month period, and at the conclusion of the Group's work, the convener of the LDG submits a completed Local Discernment Group Report (Addendum 9). The LDG discusses this document with the Nominee and both the Nominee and Group sign the document. This report is then sent to the Bishop.

If it is the LDG's recommendation that the Nominee continue discernment to identify appropriate lay ministry, a lay discernment mentor may be assigned at the request of the Nominee. Contact the Canon to the Ordinary to arrange for a mentor. If the Nominee wishes to discuss the LDG's recommendation, he/she/they may contact the Offices of the Bishop to set up an appointment.

If it is the LDG's recommendation that the Nominee possesses qualities necessary for ordained ministry, he/she/they should continue discerning his/her/their call to ordained ministry.
- Nominee requests an appointment with the Bishop.
- During this meeting with the Bishop, the Nominee may discuss the financial realities of training

and formation.
- If the Bishop chooses to invite the Nominee to meet the COM, the COM Chair will connect directly with the Nominee to provide details of the first meeting.

Step 6: Commission on Ministry First Meeting

COM, which will have received from the Offices of the Bishop the Nominee Information Form, Spiritual Autobiography, Qualities of Life-giving Ordained Ministry assessment tool, and essay responses to Interview with a Deacon and a Priest, schedules a meeting with the Nominee for an initial interview. The Nominee is responsible for personal expenses incurred for this meeting including any overnight lodging involved.

After the first meeting with the Nominee, the COM can recommend to the Bishop any of the following:

- Invite the Nominee to participate in a discernment exercise outside of their local faith community.
- Ask the Nominee to return at a later date.
- Recommend that the Nominee pursue licensed lay ministry opportunities in the church. A lay discernment mentor may be assigned at the request of the Nominee. Contact the Canon to the Ordinary to arrange for a mentor.

Step 7: Discernment Exercise Outside the Local Faith Community

Upon recommendation of the COM following the first meeting, the Bishop will arrange a two-month guided discernment exercise away from the Nominee's faith community to be completed before the second meeting with the COM. See Discernment Exercise Outside Local Faith Community (Addendum 10). The Canon to the Ordinary will communicate with the Nominee the next steps in the discernment exercise process. The purpose of this exercise is to give the Nominee exposure to a different faith community, and to give a wider circle an opportunity to experience the Nominee's ministry and person.

At the completion of the exercise, the supervising Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will provide the Offices of the Bishop a completed Discernment Exercise Outside Local Faith Community Report as outlined in Addendum 10.

At the completion of the exercise, the Nominee will provide the Offices of the Bishop a completed Discernment Exercise Report as outlined in Addendum 10.

During this period, Nominee will also request the Psychological Packet (Addendum 11) from the Offices of the Bishop. After filling out the packet and turning into the Offices of the Bishop, the Nominee contacts the psychologist appointed by the diocese and schedules an appointment for the psychological evaluation. The Offices of the Bishop will provide contact information for the psychologist. The Nominee's psychological evaluation must be completed and the report provided to the Offices of the Bishop prior to the second meeting with the Commission on Ministry.

The Offices of the Bishop provides Nominee with the form to be completed for the medical examination and activates the required background check as described in Title III.6.5 (j) for the Vocational Diaconate and Title III.8.5 (k) for the Priesthood (Addendum 12). These tasks should be completed, and the medical form returned to the Offices of the Bishop as soon as possible, and before the second meeting with the Commission on Ministry.

After review of guided exercise reports, results from the psychological and medical examinations and background check, and in consultation with the COM Chair, the Bishop may invite the Nominee to the second COM meeting.

Step 8: Commission on Ministry Second Meeting

At least one month prior to the second COM meeting:

- The Nominee submits an Application for Postulancy (Addendum 13).
- The Nominee's Vestry and Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon submit a Vestry Letter of Support for Postulancy (Addendum 14). In the absence of a Rector/Priest-in-Charge, the letter will be signed by the Regional Archdeacon.
- The COM will have copies of the guided discernment exercise.
- At the conclusion of the second COM meeting, the COM will:
- Recommend Postulancy (Addendum 15); OR,
- Recommend the Nominee continue discernment and return to the COM at a later date. (Specific recommendations about time frame and further study and discernment will be communicated); OR,
- Recommend the Nominee, in cooperation with their Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, pursue lay ministry opportunities. At the request of the Nominee, lay discernment mentor may be assigned by the Chair of COM.

Two years must elapse before an individual may enter a new discernment process for ordained ministry.

The Bishop, following the second COM meeting will inform the Nominee of the COM's recommendation and the Bishop's decision. The Bishop will also notify the Nominee's Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Senior Warden and Archdeacon, COM, and the Standing Committee of the Bishop's decision.

Postulancy

Postulancy is the time between being a Nominee and a Candidate for Holy Orders that involves continued exploration of and formation in the Postulant's call to the Diaconate or the Priesthood. Postulancy is required to begin formal training and formation leading to ordained ministry.

- If the Nominee is seeking ordination to the Priesthood, Nominee submits Financial Assessment and Planning Guide for Nominees to Holy Orders (Addendum 17) to the Bishop. The Bishop may request a financial plan at an earlier date if there are concerns about the Nominee's financial situation.
- Postulants may choose to enroll in a seminary approved by the Bishop or consult with COM's Committee on Ordination Education and Formation for an alternate course of education and formation. (See Addendum 18)
- A Nominee's relationship with their sponsoring congregation changes during this time. It is not expected that postulants are present in their sponsoring faith communities with regularity but are expected to update Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon on progress and learnings. It is expected that Nominees worship regularly and engage in field experiences as required.
- Field Education outside the local faith community is required and requirements will be communicated either through seminary or through COEF.
- One unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at an accredited American Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) site is required (in some cases, CPE may be completed during Candidacy).

During the time of preparation for Holy Orders, all Postulants are expected to communicate directly with the Bishop by letter four times a year, in the Ember Weeks ("Ember Day Letters"), reflecting upon academic, personal, and spiritual life and development. Ember Days are: St. Lucy's Day (December 13); the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays after the First Sunday in Lent; Pentecost; and Holy Cross Day (September 14). Please email the bishop directly (markv@diolex.org) or send physical mail to his attention at the Offices of the Bishop by post.

Any Postulant may be removed as a Postulant at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Postulant, the Postulant's Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Senior Warden and Archdeacon, COM, the Standing Committee and the Dean of the seminary the Postulant may be attending.

Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of continued education and formation in preparation for ordination. A Postulant may apply for Candidacy after successfully completing one half of his/her/their Seminary studies or approved course of study through COEF, and approximately a **minimum** of six months after being granted Postulancy. To request candidacy:

- The Postulant submits the Application for Candidacy (Addendum 21). The request must include the date Postulancy was granted.
- The Vestry and Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Senior Warden of the Postulant's faith community must submit Vestry Letter of Support for Candidacy (Addendum 22). In the absence of a Rector/Priest-in-Charge, the letter will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.
- A Seminary Report of Progress/Committee on Ordination Education and Formation Mid-Study Report is submitted from the seminary or approved course of study related to the Postulant's suitability for Holy Orders, or a report from COEF (Addendum 19).
- Clinical Pastoral Education evaluation (Addendum 20).

COM will review all requests for Candidacy and recommend to the Bishop and Standing Committee that:

- The Postulant be granted Candidacy; OR,
- The Postulant continue discernment through additional studies or programs as clearly outlined by the COM; OR,
- The Postulant's request for Candidacy not be granted. In consultation with the Bishop, and at the request of the Postulant, a lay discernment mentor may be assigned by the Chair of COM.

Upon receipt of a statement from the COM (Addendum 23) recommending Candidacy and attesting to the continuing formation of the Postulant, and having had the opportunity to review documentation, the Standing Committee will then find the nearest opportunity to meet with the Postulant prior to rendering a recommendation to the Bishop that:

- The Postulant be granted Candidacy (Addendum 24); OR,
- The Postulant continue discernment through additional studies or programs as clearly outlined by the COM; OR,
- The Postulant's request for Candidacy not be granted. In consultation with the Bishop, and at the request of the Postulant, a lay discernment mentor may be assigned by the Chair of COM.

Ultimately, the decision to admit the Postulant as a Candidate for Ordination resides with the Bishop. The Bishop will:

- Admit the Postulant as a Candidate (Addendum 25); defer Candidacy; or, at the request of the Postulant, assign a lay discernment mentor to work through the next steps of discernment.
- If Candidacy is granted, and the Candidate is in the process for the Priesthood, the Offices of the Bishop registers the Candidate for the General Ordination Examination (GOE)

(January) or locally administered Ordination Exam (Addendum 26) (time suitable).

A Candidate for Ordination must remain in canonical relationship with the Diocese in which admission has been granted until ordination, except, for reasons acceptable to the Bishop, the Candidate may be transferred to another Diocese upon request provided that the Bishop of the receiving Diocese is willing to accept the Candidate (Title III.6.4(c) and III.8.4(c)). A candidate's first vocational call and church placement must be made in consultation with the Bishop.

Each Candidate for Ordination shall continue to communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, human, spiritual and practical development, until ordination.

Any Candidate may be removed as a Candidate at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Candidate, the Candidate's Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Senior Warden and Archdeacon, COM, the Standing Committee and the Dean of the Seminary the Candidate may be attending.

Ordination to the Diaconate for Vocational Deacons

A Candidate for Ordination to the Diaconate may apply for Ordination one year (or at least six (6) months after) being granted Candidacy and upon attainment of at least twenty- four years of age.

The Offices of the Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

- An Application for Ordination to the Diaconate (Addendum 27) from the Candidate
- Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination to the Diaconate (Addendum 28)
- Evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy including dates
- Documentation of the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons
- COM Recommendation for Ordination to the Diaconate (Addendum 29)
- If the medical and psychological examinations and the background check have taken place more than 36 months prior to Ordination, they must be updated as stated in Title III.6.5 (j).

Upon review of the required documents, the Standing Committee:

- With a majority of the members' consent, shall certify that the canonical requirements for Ordination to the Diaconate have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend to the Bishop approval of the Candidate's request for Ordination to the Diaconate (Addendum 30).
- The Bishop informs the Candidate and the Candidate's Rector/Priest-in-Charge or Senior Warden and Archdeacon of his/her/their decision.
- The Bishop takes order for ordination to the diaconate (Addendum 31) sets the date for ordination.

Ordination to the Diaconate for those Called to the Priesthood

A Candidate for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate may apply for Ordination one year (or at least six months) after being granted Candidacy and upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age.

The Offices of the Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

- An Application for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (Addendum 32) from Candidate
- Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (Addendum 33)
- Evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy including dates
- Documentation of the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons
- COM Recommendation for Ordination as a Transitional Deacon (Addendum 34)
- If the medical and psychological examinations and the background check have taken place more than 36 months prior to Ordination, they must be updated as stated in Title III.6.5 (j).

Upon review of the required documents, the Standing Committee:

- With a majority of the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for Ordination to the Diaconate have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend to the Bishop approval of the Candidate's request for Ordination as a Transitional Deacon (Addendum 35).
- The Bishop informs the Candidate and the Candidate's Rector/Priest-in-Charge or Senior Warden and Archdeacon of his/her/their decision.
- The Bishop takes order for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (Addendum 36) sets the date for ordination.

Ordination to the Priesthood

A person may be ordained as a Priest at least six months after Ordination as a Transitional Deacon.

The Offices of the Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

- An Application for Ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 37) from Candidate
- Evidence of the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy, Candidacy, and Ordination as a Deacon
- The Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 38)
- A COM Recommendation for Ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 39)

The Bishop may require reports from other persons attesting to the readiness of the Deacon for Ordination to the Priesthood.

Upon review of the required documents, the Standing Committee:

- With a majority of the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for Ordination to the Diaconate have been met;
- that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds;
- and that they recommend to the Bishop approval of the Candidate's request for Ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 40).

The Bishop informs the Deacon, takes order for ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 41) and sets the date for ordination.

Addendum 1
Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry

Introduction

There are a variety of gifts and characteristics that make for faithful leadership in the Church. Yet at its core, faithful Christian leadership benefits from four qualities that may be described as **Spiritual Vitality, Sense of Self, Relational Maturity, and Capacity to Lead.** These qualities exist in a wide range of personalities—for instance, introverts and extraverts may possess them, all nine of the enneagram types may possess them, or those who fit the frames of any of the other ways we understand human beings may possess them.

No one person may possess all these qualities, but at this point in the Church's life, these qualities point both toward the types of leaders needed and toward the capacities one needs for one's own sake to thrive in this work. These capacities may not be fully developed at the early stages of the discernment process, especially if the Nominee is younger. In this instance, it is necessary to discern whether or not these qualities exist in some nascent form.

Discernment is the spiritual practice of listening deeply and intentionally to a person's life to hear and understand the movement of the Spirit, to clarify God's call, and to move more deeply into that call. In the Episcopal Church, discernment is best done in community over time. This survey instrument helps provide the Nominee and the others involved at every level of the discernment process— Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, Local Discernment Group, COEF, Commission on Ministry (COM), Standing Committee, and Bishop—a way to discern the presence of these qualities in the Nominee.

Instructions

The qualities are divided into four areas of exploration: Spiritual Vitality, Sense of Self, Relational Maturity, and Capacity to Lead. Below each quality, there is a brief statement that articulates how the COM understands this quality. Some of us think more concretely, some of us think more narratively. We have provided both a rating scale and a place for narrative to capture as fully as possible your sense of these qualities in the Nominee. Though you may favor one approach over the other, please attend to both the rating scale and the narrative.

Rating Scale: Next to each quality, you will find a rating scale from 0-6. Please mark the scale to indicate the extent to which you see this quality in the Nominee, with 0 being Undeveloped and 6 being Strongly Developed. Your sense of this quality may be gathered through listening to the Nominee as they speak of their life and ministry up to this point and/or through direct observation and experience of the Nominee's life and ministry.

Narrative: Directly below each quality are three lines. Please provide a brief narrative to express more fully your sense of this quality as it relates to the Nominee.

Nominee's Name: _____

Person completing the survey: _____

Date: _____

Role: _____

SPIRITUAL VITALITY

Leaders in the church need to have a compelling spirituality because a tangible connection with the Living God is at the heart of all ministry. These qualities support and reveal such a spirituality

- Holiness and wholeness of life

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a lived experience of the presence of God and dedicated his/her/their life both to being a conduit of that presence as well as to growing in that presence. Drinks from the wellspring of faith, hope, love, and mercy.

- Compassion

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Exhibits a passionate awareness of God's connectedness with all creation. He/she/they exhibit an awareness of God's mercy in his/her/their life and has a capacity to extend that mercy.

- Committed to the way of Jesus

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a sense of how he/she/they live and in how he/she/they speak about Jesus and his way are central to his/her/their being and life.

- Exhibits paschal living (cycle of death and resurrection)

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Can identify the cycle of death and resurrection in the pattern of his/her/their life, in the lives of those around them, in the life of the community of faith, and in the life of the world.

- Genuine love of the Body of Christ in all of its manifestations

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a capacity to love the Body of Christ, in all of its manifestations, even when it is necessary to critique/challenge it. Note: The Body of Christ is found at the congregational/local level, diocesan level, church-wide level, and global level, and is broader than any one institutional expression of the Church.

- Spiritual Practice

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

One senses in his/her/their presence that he/she/they walk the talk and that his/her/their spiritual practices give witness to the grace and faith that undergirds those practices.

- Vulnerability

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

He/she/they are willing to risk letting himself/herself/theirself be known. He/she/they are willing to live the baptismal life publicly so that those entrusted to his/her/their care can see what this life looks like. He/she/they are willing to risk exposure to reveal some aspect of the Gospel that may not be comfortable.

- Willingness to question /grow/engage

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a learning stance toward life/self/vocation/the Church. Exhibits curiosity. Likes to be engaged with the process of growing as a human being and as a follower of Jesus.

- Additional Comments

SENSE OF SELF

Our sense of self is given in our baptism. Various qualities of self are needed for leaders and their communities to thrive.

- Authenticity

Underdeveloped — Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to allow him/her/themselves to be truly seen and to let him/her/their True Self be present. Him/her/their life is congruent. Words and actions, being and doing, are aligned.

- Honesty

Underdeveloped — Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

What he/she/they say and how he/she/they live are congruent. One senses an integrity about the person, his/her/their actions, and his/her/their words.

	Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
● Integration of mind, heart, body, and spirit	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

One senses in his/her/their presence a harmony of mind, heart, body, and spirit.

	Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
● Playful	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Doesn't take her/him/themselves too seriously. Has a capacity to have fun and to laugh.

	Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
● Resilience	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has the capacity to come through a difficult circumstance or season. Has a capacity to find a way forward when he/she/they hit a wall.

- Rooted

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Conveys a sense of rootedness, groundedness, stability. Knows who he/she/they are, even while knowing that he/she/they are always growing, changing, and evolving.

- Self-awareness

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Knows him/her/themselves. Has a capacity to observe her/him/themselves and to know his/her/their role in an encounter with another. Has a capacity to understand what other people or situations trigger in him/her/them. Knows his/her/their demons or Achilles heel, as well as his/her/their gifts.

- Self-care

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has clear practices to care for his/her/their body, mind, heart, and spirit. Exhibits healthy rhythms of rest, work, and play. Tends to intimate relationships with care.

- Additional Comments

RELATIONAL MATURITY

Life in Christ is inherently relational. These qualities are needed for relationships in the Body of Christ to be life-giving.

- Ability to connect/interact

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a capacity to connect and interact with a wide range of people in a wide range of settings.

- Emotionally engaged, even in conflict

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a capacity to stay present in the face of conflict, anxiety, anger, fear, grief, and the other emotions from which we generally run. Has a capacity to step out of the immediacy of strong emotion and has the capacity to know when and how to re-engage in a more life-giving way.

- Empathy

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has the capacity to be with another without discounting their experience (because their experience makes us uncomfortable) and without trying to fix them (because their experience makes us uncomfortable). Has the capacity to connect with the emotion that someone is experiencing (Brené Brown's definition).

- Having a heart for people

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Genuinely likes people. Has a curiosity about people. Has a capacity to love the people entrusted to his/her/their care and to receive their love.

- Humility

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Has a sense of her/his/their own humanity and the humanity of others. Is in touch with and has a comfort with his/her/their limits and the limits of others because he/she/they are aware of God's grace. Has a capacity to see that others may be right. Approaches life as a learner, even when he/she/they have some experience under his/her/their belt. Has a sense of groundedness.

- Trustworthiness

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Her/his/their presence invites trust. One senses that he/she/they can be trusted.

-

- Additional Comments

CAPACITY TO LEAD

In a time of great change in the Church and in the world, these qualities are needed to lead communities so that they may thrive and flourish.

- Ability to articulate

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to convey faith, ideas, and the tradition in ways that people can understand. Has a capacity to communicate clearly, verbally, and in writing.

- Accountability

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to admit when he/she/they have made a mistake or messed up, is willing to do what he/she/they need to do to make it right, and when the fabric of a relationship has been strained, is willing to make amends. Has a willingness to be held accountable by others. Has a willingness to hold others accountable

- Authority

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has clarity about and is willing to claim his/her/their voice and to be decisive in action once next steps have been discerned. Has a capacity to help others claim their authority.

- Capacity to inspire

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to rally others around a vision or course of action that has been discerned. He/she/they are someone you would want to follow.

- Comfort with change

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to stay anchored in the midst of change. Has a capacity to stay present when the people and environment around her/him/them are anxious.

- Contextual awareness of the Church, cultures, and the world

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has an awareness of a changed and changing Church and the world.

- Courage

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to speak, act, and take risks for the sake of truth.

- Creativity

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to make something new, or to take something that is and see something new in it.

- Imagination

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to see possibilities and alternatives. Has a capacity to see a third way forward in the midst of either/or options.

- Intellectual curiosity

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Exhibits a curiosity about people, ideas, the tradition, his/her/their faith, and the world.

- Resourceful

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Has a capacity to assess a situation and bring appropriate skills, gifts, and competencies of self or others to that situation.

- Self-giving

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

He/she/they exhibit a willingness to offer himself/herself/themself. He/she/they exhibit a willingness to yield for the sake of another and has the capacity to discern when such yielding is appropriate.

- Vocational flexibility

Underdeveloped Strongly Developed

❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

He/she/they are open to engaging in a variety of different ministry expressions. He/she/they are open to a variety of situations or locations in which ministry might be expressed.

- Willingness to ask for help

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Exhibits a willingness to ask for help. He/she/they seek out counsel from appropriate sources. He/she/they work well in collaboration with others and not as a lone ranger.

- Willingness to experiment

Underdeveloped						Strongly Developed
❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Exhibits a capacity to try new things as an experiment. Has a capacity to risk failure and to learn from it.

- Additional Comments

The material in Addendum 1 has been adapted from the Diocese of Western North Carolina.

Addendum 2
A Guide for Writing a Spiritual Autobiography

A spiritual autobiography is the story of significant events, people, and places that have influenced your relationship with God. Here are some suggestions to help you prepare your Spiritual Autobiography. **NOTE: In its final form your Spiritual Autobiography will be a written document of 4-10 pages double-spaced.**

Stepping Stones

A stepping stone is a word or brief phrase that describes a significant point or period along the road of life – for example, "early childhood," "starting a family," "starting a profession," "parenting," "lost in the wilderness," or "retirement."

Stepping stones show a continuity of development despite the apparent shifting of direction along the way. To use this technique for writing your spiritual autobiography, follow these steps:

- Quietly sit and think about the course of your life. On a blank page, start with the first stepping stone: "I was born ....." Describe key people and events of the early part of your life.
- Continue writing about the remaining stepping stones until you reach the present day. Identify no more than a dozen stepping stones from the beginning of life until now.
- Once you are done, read over what you have written, sensing the flow of your life with its ups and downs. Then write a brief paragraph describing your life as a whole.
- To explore your life more fully, go back over each stepping stone, expanding what you have written to include the tone and atmosphere of that period, the significant persons in your life and your relationship with them at that time, your social attitudes, beliefs, and loyalties. Describe who and what inspired you: What books influenced you? Who were the "God bearers" in your life? The more you add to each stepping stone, the deeper your reflection will be.

Between the Stepping Stones – Times of Transition

This method asks you to look at endings and beginnings and the time between significant points of movement in your life. The time between learning about pregnancy and the birth of a baby; the time between the loss of a spouse or another loved one and regaining your footing and moving on; the time between learning of an impending move of household and feeling comfortable in a new community; children "leaving the nest"; retirement – or other periods which you see as "in-betweens." It is about change.

Call up several times of change in your life and spend some time reflecting on the transition periods that accompanied these changes. Use the definitions below to help sort out what was going on within you and in the world around you during these times. Record your actions and feelings.

Here are some definitions to help you with this format:

Transition – Passage from one place, state, or stage of development to another. This is a three-part psychological process.

- The "Ending Phase" – letting go of the old situation or identity. Giving up the familiar and valued. May be accompanied by feelings of disillusionment, disorientation and/or betrayal.
- The "Neutral Zone Phase" – exploring the unknown territory between the past and the future – limbo, emptiness, or wilderness. An interim period between one orientation that is no longer appropriate and another that does not yet exist. Creativity and a new identity are born of this phase.
- The "Beginning Phase" – creating and moving toward a new vision and plan. A time of rebirth. An inner realignment. "Making lemonade from lemons." Grieving is near completion and the chaos of the unknown has been endured long enough for something new to appear. Hope and energy are renewed, new possibilities are defined.
    - Identify: What was happening? Was it accidental or intentional? A result of your actions or the actions of others? What did you bring with you from the past? What did you leave in the past? What did you learn about yourself? Others? The world? God? Explore your feelings, fears, and hopes.
    - Select and describe one or more periods of transition in your spiritual autobiography.

You may also find that you need to create your own phases and definitions to fit the shape of your own life's story. You are encouraged to do so.

Timelines

Another way to examine your personal story is to examine how it weaves itself with the personal stories of others and the larger history of our times.

You can use this method for your individual story. Follow these steps:

- Draw two parallel lines, one for historical events and one for personal events.
- On the far left put the date of your birth and at the far right, today's date. You may find it helpful to divide the lines into decades.
- On the historical line mark major historical milestones like the beginning or end of a war, assassination of an important figure, or the tragedy of 9/11.
- On the personal line, identify significant events in your life.
- Examine the timeline. Consider questions like:
    - How did historical events impact personal events?
    - Where was God present in those events?
    - Where did you find grace and where did you feel that grace was lacking?

Your Life in Pictures

A pictorial autobiography helps you "see yourself" in the context of family, friends, and the larger society around you, as well as in relationship to the Church. Here is one way to do this:

- Begin by closing your eyes. Imagine you are holding a photo album which covers your whole life. The first picture shows the day of your birth, and the last one shows you entering this room.
- In your mind turn the pages and look at the pictures of your life. For example, see yourself as a child with your parents, in your home or your school, with a favorite teacher, at your high school or college graduation. Then see yourself as an adult, with friends, spouse, and children, at your workplace, in your church, and at special moments of celebration.
- Focus on the people who influenced your spiritual growth – grandparents, clergy, teachers, etc. – and the events that had a major impact on shaping who you are today. Silently give thanks for these memories.
- Produce a pictorial record of your life on a piece of paper or a poster, or in a journal. You can do this by creating an artistic representation of your life (e.g., drawing, painting, computer graphics), or by using old photographs that are particularly meaningful to you. Consider answering these questions as you describe your journey.
    - Where did you find community and communion, solace and support?
    - What role has the Church played in your life?
    - How did you reach out to others and others reach out to you?
    - What form did prayer take, and what did it mean to you and those around you?

Your Personal Histories

You do not have one history but many – no single expression exhausts everything you have experienced. Each telling of your history reveals something different. In light of this, a way of approaching your history is from the standpoint of various themes in your life or by using different perspectives. Here are some examples:

- Your physical life: Construct a timeline or write a narrative about your physical development and patterns of health, from childhood to the present. Have there been events in your physical life – serious accidents, major illnesses, etc. – that changed the trajectory of your life?
- Your life with others: Write your history from the perspective of significant people in your life. For example, you might focus on the history of a particularly important friendship, or the ups and downs of your relationship with a parent or a sibling. How have these relationships changed over the years? What have they meant to you? How do they affect your life now?
- Your intellectual history: When did you first realize that what you thought mattered? Is there a particular philosophy or set of values that has helped shape your life? What books or thinkers are particularly important to you? List thoughts and events that capture the main ideas of your intellectual history. What influence did these have on your spiritual growth?

- History of play: How have you used your leisure time? What kinds of games did you play when you were younger, and what do you play now? Is there a hobby or sport that has been particularly important to you? Has it played a role in your spiritual development, and if so, how? How have you maintained a healthy balance between work and play in your life? After you have approached your personal history in these or other ways, step back and look at the overall picture they give you of your life. Record any insights, ideas, learnings, and reactions.

The material in Addendum 2 has been adapted from the Church of the Holy Comforter, in Vienna, VA, the Diocese of the Rio Grande, and the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Addendum 3
Nominee's Interview with a Deacon and a Priest

The Nominee should interview a deacon and a priest (neither of whom should serve in the Nominee's faith community) and ask them the questions listed below.

The Nominee is to write a 1000-word essay in which he/she/they reflect on what has been learned from these interviews and which addresses the following questions. The Nominee is to share this essay with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon for discussion and may be asked to share this information at future steps in the discernment process.

- What was stirred up in you as you listened and remembered the interviews?
- How do you understand the public nature of ordained ministry and the potential stresses that ordination will put on your household?
- How do you think your age may affect your vocation as an ordained person both positively and negatively?

Interview Questions:

1. How did you experience your call to ministry and how has your understanding and experience of that call changed, grown, or focused over time?
2. Describe lay ministry as you understand it.
3. Describe the ministry of a deacon, as you understand it.
4. Describe the ministry of a priest, as you understand it.
5. Describe the process of vocational discernment that led to your ordination. What in or during that process helped clarify for you and the Church that your call to ordained ministry was that of the Diaconate/Priesthood?
6. Tell me about a few of your experiences of greatest learning and growth while you were preparing for ordination.
7. Tell me about a few of your experiences of greatest learning and growth since you were ordained.
8. What is the most difficult aspect of ordained ministry for you? For your household?
9. What has been the "cost" of ordination for you and your household? What have you and your household sacrificed in order to respond to this vocational call?

The Nominee's written reflections will be shared with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon. It is appropriate for the Nominee to explain how the interviews are being used when making arrangements for the interviews. Please allow one to two hours for each interview.

Addendum 4
Important Questions to Consider Before Submitting an Application for Holy Orders

The following questions are recommended for your contemplation and point to significant gifts that are necessary to function in a healthy way in ordained ministry.

- What are my spiritual gifts and how have I put them to work in the church thus far?
- Am I able to relocate my family to attend seminary, receive an assignment, and be open to future calls?
- How sacrificial have I been in the giving of my time and talent to lay ministry? Have I volunteered regularly without being asked?
- Have I been a member of more than one Episcopal congregation? How is my perception of congregational life limited if I have been a member of only one or two congregations?
- Am I a leader? How do I describe my leadership style in the context of ministry? What leadership positions have I held (in a secular or church setting) that motivated others to action? Do I enjoy that role? Have I helped to develop other leaders?
- How tough is my hide? How have I handled judgment and criticism from others? How aware am I of the judgment and criticism that comes with ordination?
- Am I willing to become humble and be a servant to other people's needs for the rest of my life, many times sacrificing my own needs?
- How have I taken on the challenge of proclaiming Jesus Christ to persons in my family, acquaintances and people in my workplace? How seriously have I taken the Great Commission? Do I share my faith story easily?
- How have I demonstrated "love of my neighbor as myself?" Do I see the good in even difficult people and situations? How have I demonstrated the unconditional love of Jesus Christ to all sorts and conditions of people? Give examples.
- What do I do to grow and deepen my devotional life? Do I take time to pray daily, remembering others in my prayers as well as myself? Have I read about the lives of the mystics of the church and am I acquainted with their sincere and extraordinary contemplative lives?
- How do I use the Bible as a constant companion? Do I read it regularly? How does its content excite and energize me? What more about the Bible am I eager to learn; – its origin, its revelation, the application of its truths to my life as well as to the lives of others?
- What is my knowledge of the history of the Anglican Church and its development as the Episcopal Church in the United States?
- What is my knowledge and comprehension of Anglican liturgy and theology?

Addendum 5
Expected Financial Costs of Discernment, Education, and Formation

If a faith community does the holy work of lifting up a congregant for Holy Orders, that community is welcomed into a supporting role that includes both spiritual and financial support.

Both the Bishop and the COM hope and expect that the Nominee and the Nominee's faith community will begin a conversation early in the process to discuss a community's financial role.

Costs incurred will be shared equally by Nominee, faith community, and Diocese with each paying one-third of the cost of the following items:

Most values listed below are approximations. Expenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- The psychological evaluation by the diocesan-appointed psychologist is $2000.
- Mileage (at the current IRS reimbursement rate) for COM trainer for the LDG training at the in addition to any personal mileage incurred by Nominee.
- Oxford Background Check (paid to the Diocese): $250
- Medical examination: $350
- Updated psychological and medical examinations and background checks may be required.

The cost of education and formation is the responsibility of the Nominee. Diocesan funds ***may*** be available to help offset educational costs. The following are **approximate** costs of formation not including books, vestments, travel, etc.:

- Deacon Formation and Education Program: (3-year program @ approximately $2200/year, plus books, vestments, travel, etc.) $6600
- Priests:
    - Formation for bi-vocational priests: $20,000 (includes food, on-site accommodations, and transportation)
    - Residential seminary application fees: $150
    - Three years of residential seminary: $60,000 - $125,000+ depending on which of the approved Episcopal seminaries one attends. Generous scholarships, and even full tuition, may be available through seminaries.
    - Candidates who have already earned an MDiv may be required to complete an approved Anglican Studies or Certificate in Anglican Ministry program: $3,500 - $12,000.
- Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) fees: $1500 plus living expenses if living away from home.

Additional costs related to ordinations, also divided in thirds, may also be incurred. ($200-$500)

Addendum 6
Letter of Support from the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Regional Archdeacon

Date _____

Nominee's Name _____

Rector's/Priest's-in-Charge/Archdeacon Name

_____

Nominee's Faith Community

_____

Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon Faith Community

_____

I, the undersigned, have met with the above-named Nominee beginning (date)

_____and ending (date) _____, for the purpose of discerning his/her/their call into ordained ministry. As a result of our prayerful conversations and the completion of the assessment survey Qualities for a Life-giving Ordained Ministry, I find that this Nominee exhibits the requisite spiritual vitality, sense of self, relational maturity, capacity to lead, and strong sense of God's movement and intention for his/her/their life that are needed for ordained ministry. Therefore, I strongly affirm the Nominee's proceeding in the discernment process for ordained ministry in the Diocese of Lexington.

_____

Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon signature

Addendum 7
Nominee Information Form

Full legal name: _____

Preferred name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Residential address (if different from mailing address):

_____

Telephone, primary ( )_____ Telephone, other ( )_____

Email address: _____

Date and place of birth: _____

Level of education attained and degrees earned: (please attach all transcripts)

_____

Marital Status: _____

Faith Community/Sponsoring Congregation: _____

Name of your sponsoring priest: _____

How long have you been a congregant of your current faith community? _____

Have you been engaged in any other faith communities in the Diocese of Lexington? If so, which one(s), for how long, and when?

_____

Baptized (date and place): _____

Confirmation/Reception (date and place): _____

Please provide evidence of Baptism and Confirmation with this information form.

Has an application been made previously for postulancy? _____

(If yes, please provide date(s) and diocese(s)) _____

Discerning (circle one) Diaconate Priesthood

I understand that, should I be ordained deacon or priest, I will serve in the Diocese of Lexington for a minimum of three years unless I am released by the Bishop of Lexington.

Nominee signature: _____

Nominee printed name: _____

Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon signature: _____

Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon printed name: _____

Addendum 8
A Guide for Local Discernment Groups

Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling; Psalm 43.3

0 God, you led your holy apostles to ordain ministers in every place: Grant that your Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may choose suitable persons for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and may uphold them in their work for the extension of your kingdom; through him who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 256, For the Ministry (Ember Days, II) For the choice of fit persons for the ministry)

The Local Discernment Group (LDG) is at the heart of a person's discernment of a call to ordained ministry. It is within the common life of the faith community that each of us finds the space, encouragement, and courage to hear the various ways that God is calling us to serve. The work of the LDG is to create this same kind of holy space and loving support for the discernment of ministry for one of your congregants. This work, in turn, provides the opportunity for prayer and holy discernment for each member of the group. You are, in the words of the writer of the letter to the Ephesians, working "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

May God bless you in this important work.

What is a Local Discernment Group?

Ministry happens in community, and so it naturally follows that the call to ministry also comes through the community. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are committed through our Baptismal Covenant to support one another in ministry. Therefore, it makes sense to begin the discernment of call within the community of the person being called, where he/she/they are well-known. The work of an LDG is to aid in discernment for a Nominee in that community.

Everyone is called to ministry as a follower of Jesus Christ. Many and various ministries spring naturally from the life and work of the laity. On occasion some might feel a specific call to ordained ministry. In such situations the community works together to answer the question of whether ordination is the form his/her/their Christian ministry could take. Answering this question requires a time of exploration, reflection, and evaluation.

The role of the LDG is to assist in the consideration of the Nominee's call to ministry and to determine whether this call is to a lay or ordained ministry. The Nominee and the LDG come together in these meetings to listen carefully for God's guidance and to prayerfully delve into the crucial questions of call and vocation, the Nominee's potential for leadership, and his/her/their

spiritual, emotional, physical, and personal readiness to pursue the path to ordination. While this work is certainly focused on the Nominee in discernment, the work of the LDG has the potential to be mutually beneficial for all involved. LDG members should, through their prayer and study, learn more about the ministries of the Church as well as their own gifts for ministry.

This process also provides a means to carry the discussion about ministry into the larger faith community. While the specific content of the LDG's conversations with the Nominee is strictly confidential, the discernment process can serve as a training course in ministry and faith development for faith communities.

The members of the LDG are asked to enter into a special relationship with the Nominee on behalf of the larger Church. This requires a commitment of time and energy, a willingness to share of themselves, and the courage to lovingly ask honest and sometimes challenging questions of one another. This kind of commitment calls for deep humility and a readiness to be open and candid - to speak the truth with love - in the context of a sacred, caring community. The LDG must be willing to look beyond the desires of the individual and to consider the needs of the broader church.

Who should serve in a Local Discernment Group*?*

If you have been asked to serve in an LDG, your congregation's leadership has seen in you the capacity for this kind of deep spiritual work. Your willingness to serve is an act of faith and generosity, and you have demonstrated unique gifts to offer this process. While we all have gifts to offer in the Kingdom of God, not everyone is best suited for this kind of intense spiritual work.

Some basic qualifications for this ministry are:

- being a follower of Jesus Christ who manifests a commitment to prayer and to faithful discipleship in his/her/their own life
- knowing a sense of one's own ministry and vocation
- being well-known and trusted by the faith community
- having knowledge and experience of The Episcopal Church and its place in the Anglican Communion
- being willing to make a sustained commitment to prayer and to the discernment process
- embody the kind of courage it takes to engage in potentially difficult conversations with love and grace
- to share honestly and with integrity
- the ability to attend each meeting of the LDG

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, in consultation with the Nominee, will appoint between three and five congregants to the LDG, who serve at the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon's discretion. These congregants should represent, to the degree possible, the breadth and diversity of the community itself in terms of sex, age, race, and life circumstances.

- If possible, the LDG should include at least two congregants who know the Nominee as well as those who do not.

- The LDG must also include at least two *additional* members who are lay congregants from a neighboring Episcopal faith community (selected in consultation with the Regional Archdeacon.)
- *The strong hope is that these meetings will take place face-to-face, although the Bishop understands that in some instances these meetings may take place virtually.*

Since the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon remains the pastor to both the LDG and the Nominee, he/she/they should not be present at the LDG sessions other than the initial training.

The Convenor is a member of the LDG whose primary task is to help facilitate the work of the committee. The responsibilities of the Convenor are to:

- set the time and location of the meetings, including setting up Zoom links for virtual meetings
- work to create a safe and confidential environment for discussion
- help to maintain the continuity of discussion from meeting to meeting
- make sure that all members have an opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions

The LDG will select a Convener at the initial training. While the entire group is responsible for completing a final report, it is the Convenor who then presents this report to the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Vestry.

How does the Local Discernment Group work?

The primary work of the LDG is holy listening. During the LDG's meetings, the group will be gathering information, forming impressions, and searching within themselves regarding their perceptions of the Nominee's call. All of this work is grounded in a quality of holy receptivity both to what each person says as well as to what God is speaking into the moment. In order to create this atmosphere of prayerfulness, the LDG will undertake the serious, sacred work of preparation to develop mutual trust and understanding. This work touches on the divine rather than being well-intentioned but non-critical affirmation and is done with minds and hearts open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The LDG's work is only one step in the process of clarifying God's call for this person. Since this kind of ministry discernment may be new to some members of the group, the LDG sessions may be somewhat of a learning experience for those who are involved. At times, there may even be a feeling of not knowing what to do. It is important to listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to reach out for help if needed. The LDG's report is of great value in the discernment process because of its unique perspective; however, this report is not the only factor which determines whether or not the Nominee moves forward in the process. Discernment is accomplished in community, and this community includes not only your particular faith community but also the community of the Diocese of Lexington.

As the LDG begins to engage in conversation, members need to be guided by their own discerning hearts. If any member feels uneasy about the process at any stage, he/she/they should share those

feelings with the group, voicing concerns in an honest and caring manner. At times, it may be beneficial to seek the guidance of the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon. Hopefully, by using all the resources available, the LDG will be able to conduct its work in a mutually supportive, healthy atmosphere and make its recommendation without reservation.

How does the LDG work with the Commission on Ministry?

The COM is an advisory body to the Bishop of the Diocese of Lexington, which, among other tasks, assists the Bishop in discernment of Nominees suitable for Holy Orders. In carrying out that charge, the COM carefully considers the work and report of the LDG, which is included in the Nominee's file and is read and discussed by all members of the COM.

When an LDG is formed, a member of the COM will join the LDG's initial training meeting and answer any questions of the COM.

How does the LDG work with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon?

If the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, having met with the Nominee for some time, sees signs of a call to ordained ministry, he/she/they may feel confident that an LDG would be a helpful tool in further discernment for the Nominee. Beyond attending the initial training of the LDG and being available peripherally for questions or concerns, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon is asked not to participate in the work of the LDG. A Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon (or Deacon) in the room may unintentionally dominate, interrupt, or distract from the work of the laity.

LDG Report and Recommendation

At the conclusion of their meetings with a Nominee, the LDG completes a report and makes a recommendation that is sent to the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Vestry. Whatever the recommendations are with regard to lay ministry, the diaconate, or the priesthood, the Nominee will be affirmed and supported as one who has a calling to ministry through baptism and who is valued as a child of God.

The Rector/Priest-Charge/Archdeacon and the Vestry then make a decision as to whether to prayerfully recommend the Nominee for ordained or lay ministry based on the report of the LDG and their own observations. If they wish to recommend the Nominee for Postulancy, they complete the Vestry Letter of Support for Postulancy (Addendum 14) for that purpose and send it to the Offices of the Bishop.

How can I best prepare for service on the LDG*?*

The LDG is, first and foremost, grounded in prayer. There are many instances throughout Holy Scripture of Nominees engaging in prayer, fasting, and reflection prior to undertaking a task. These are important attitudes and practices to cultivate, both at the beginning and throughout this ministry of discernment. Each member of the LDG should have a copy of A Guide for Local

Discernment Groups (Addendum 8). They should read this document in advance of the training in order to be thoroughly familiar with its contents. It may be helpful to interview other lay and ordained ministers in the Diocese to broaden the members' understanding of what deacons, priests, and committed lay persons do in the daily context of ministry.

What do the meetings of the LDG look like?

The LDG process should include at least nine meetings (including orientation training and drafting of the report), the contents of which are detailed in this Guide. The outline of LDG meetings (included below) can be used to establish a basic format for the work of each gathering. Meetings need to be long enough to allow time for the group to review, reunite, refresh their memories about past discussions, and move ahead in its exploration of pertinent issues. There should be time for reflection at the end of each session. Each meeting requires a minimum of one and a half hours.

The LDG is asked to meet approximately once a month until all sessions are completed. The process should feel spacious, and each person should have enough time between meetings for prayer and contemplation of the topics at hand. There is no need to rush. At the same time, having meetings close enough together to keep a sense of forward momentum and consistency is also important. It is recommended that the LDG process take no less than 6 months.

Because of the personal nature of the LDG discussions, it is important to establish a climate of acceptance and trust. All members need to know that whatever they say will be honored and held in strict confidence within the group, that they will not be criticized or judged, and that there will be no advice offered to solve perceived problems. Patient, careful listening will greatly aid the process of sharing and will encourage risk taking in expressing feelings. Questions can be asked for clarity but should not be asked out of curiosity or in the manner of an interrogation. A sense of Christian love and learning is vital if these meetings are to be productive for all concerned. Such an open and accepting climate also allows room for the Holy Spirit to enter and work in each person involved. Each LDG will adopt a Group Covenant which details the way the group will interact with each other both inside and outside the meeting space. Covenant Guidelines will be shared at the initial training session.

Every member is expected to attend every session. When one member is absent, that person not only misses the discussion, but the group is weakened by the loss of that point of view. The group should take time to plan sessions in advance to ensure that all members can attend. If a member is unable to attend a session, the Convenor should be notified, and a decision made as to whether to reschedule the session for another date. Please take attendance extremely seriously.

The process you are entering as a group is a delicate one. The questions posed in each of the sessions are meant to help the members of the group “sift through” their Nominee and collective experience of themselves and of the Nominee. The Diocese is not requiring you to report the responses to the questions, but there is a need for the group to make a report of its findings. Of course, confidentiality and discretion is essential and there should be an agreement, a covenant, that the content of the discussions are not to be shared with anyone outside the group. We suggest

that when issues arise that seem beyond the scope of the committee's task they be raised jointly with the convenor, Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, LDG chair, and the Nominee.

Outline of Sessions

A Scribe should take notes for the group during each session and distribute afterwards.

Many LDGs have found it helpful to establish a structure for their meetings that includes the following elements: ***Opening Prayer, Engagement, Status Update, Discussion of Content, Reflection, Closing Prayer, and Evaluation.*** These elements are explained below.

Opening Prayer (2 minutes) Beginning with prayer helps to set the focus on God's presence within the group and throughout the entire process. Placing the group into God's hands and submitting to the guidance of the Holy Spirit requires intentional effort. Prayers can include thanksgivings and intercessions as well as a humble invocation of the Holy Spirit. The responsibility for praying during meetings should be shared as much as possible among the group. The group may also consider asking the person appointed to pray at the beginning of the meeting to intentionally continue to pray for the duration of the meeting. This person may also be tasked with pausing or interrupting the meeting for a moment of prayer should that feel helpful or necessary.

Engagement (10 minutes) Following the opening prayer, the group can then participate in a brief exercise that will help to collect the individual members from the diversity of their separate lives to the common purpose of the LDG. This may be a simple check-in which connects what is happening in each person's life with an awareness of God's grace, a statement of gratitude and/ or prayer needs, or other kinds of conversations. Ten minutes may seem like a lot of time, but this time will go quickly! Sharing should be concise, but there should be enough time for each person to share and connect to the conversation. This may also be a time to reflect on the scripture passage suggested for each meeting. What words or phrases stick out to the listener? Where does the scripture passage touch each person's life? How might God be speaking to them in those holy words?

Status Update (5 minutes) Before entering into discussion, it is usually helpful for the Convener to review the progress to date, to receive any reports that the group may have assigned, and briefly to state the goals for the current session. It is suggested that, after the second meeting, this time conclude with the reading aloud of the ordination vows for the particular order (diaconate or priesthood) about which the Nominee and the LDG are in discernment.

Meeting Format and Content (55 minutes) This time is the very the heart of the matter. This discussion should include a period of reflection on the biblical verses appointed for the meeting, as well as on the Nominee's writing sample or other project, which all should have had a chance to read before the meeting. These two points should lead naturally into a discussion of the meeting's topic - outlined for each meeting below, with appropriate questions for conversation. You may find that you need a break in the middle of this discussion - if you do, take one! You'll all be better contributors if you have a chance for a bit of rest and refreshment.

Reflection (10 minutes) Thoughtful group reflection is an important part of each session. Near the end of the meeting, take time to review - in the presence of the Nominee - the highlights of what was discussed and shared. It may be helpful to list on newsprint what helped or hindered the meeting, how the meeting format for that day was or was not useful, what subject areas need to be explored further, and what additional resources or information may need to be gathered for the next meeting. Ask yourselves specific questions about the meeting itself. How did it go? Was everyone engaged? Were people upholding the Group Covenant? Are there any procedural elements to be considered before the next meeting? What should the group be praying about in the coming days? What should be the goals for the next session?

Closing Prayer (3 minutes) The person appointed to pray for the meeting offers a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing as the group travels home and continues their work. A holy and intentional silence may also be appropriate. At the conclusion of this prayer, the Nominee is dismissed.

Evaluation (5 minutes) It is recommended that at least five minutes be allotted at the end of each session for the LDG to share their impressions and continue their evaluation of the Nominee's call on an ongoing basis. In each working session of the LDG (excluding the first session), the group will be provided with questions members should answer together. You will find these questions listed by meeting topic at the end of this document in the final evaluation form.

The last five minutes of each meeting should be a chance for the LDG, outside of the presence of the Nominee, to offer its thoughts. One person should be tasked to be the recorder of these thoughts and to write a response on behalf of the entire group. These responses will be collated by the Convenor at the end of the LDG's work into the final report that is sent to the Sponsoring Priest and the COM.

The following topics for the eight meetings of the LDG are provided for you to use as a guide. Your group may find that you need to make adjustments to this schedule or to include additional topics for conversation. Please feel free to be flexible if it helps all parties to discern God's call more clearly. The hope is that each LDG will include at least these many points of conversation for their time together.

Content for LDG Sessions

Meeting 1 Vocation and Spiritual Stories

Includes: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: Psalm 139: 1-18

Used for this session: Nominee's written spiritual autobiography (which should have been provided to LDG members prior to the meeting)

This meeting should be a time for each member of the LDG, including the Nominee, to share his/her/their spiritual story. You can do this in several ways. You can simply give each member a certain amount of time to talk about their life in spiritual terms, always answering the question of where God was in their lives during seminal moments or decision points. You can also invite each member (including the Nominee) to make two timelines of his/her/their life. The first includes major life events in his/her/their personal and professional life, including peaks, valleys, and plateaus, from birth until the present moment. The second timeline, which is superimposed over the first, is a spiritual timeline, representing his/her/their life with God. When have you felt closest to God? When have you felt distant or resistant to God?

Whichever model is chosen, the group should have time to discuss the relationships they are seeing in their own lives and in others. What calls are being seen? What ministries are being lived out? Where do they see God's grace in each other lives or in their own?

No one in the group needs to share anything that makes him/her/them uncomfortable, but all are encouraged to share as much as they can about how they perceive God to have been active in their own lives.

Note: While this is the only meeting entitled "Spiritual Stories," this kind of story-sharing can be an important way of engaging in conversation in all the following meetings. If, for example, a member is trying to get at an understanding of leadership styles, he/she/they may share an experience from his/her/their own life that illustrates the point. It is the hope that these meetings will be an opportunity for sustained and continuing sharing of stories for all the members.

Meeting 2 The Nature of Christian Ministry

Includes: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: John 13: 1-7, 12-15 or Acts 6:1-6, John 21: 15-19

Assignment for the Nominee: Write a two-page paper on your understanding of the orders of Christian ministry. To what order of ministry do you think you might be called? Why? What gifts do you have to bring to this ministry?

Or…

Imagine that you are working in a faith community that has recently called a new deacon. Write a letter to your faith community explaining the role of this person within the congregation. In your letter, imagine that you are representing the order of ministry to which you feel called, e.g. if you are in discernment for the priesthood, write the letter as if you were the rector inviting a new deacon into the congregation, and if you are in discernment for the diaconate , write the letter as if you were introducing yourself to the congregation for the first time. Be specific about the particular vocation of the deacon as it relates to both the priesthood and to the ministry of the laity.

Remembering their own stories and the fact that, by virtue of our baptisms, we are all called to Christian ministry, the members of the LDG should begin by discussing the four-fold ministry of the Church. This is a good opportunity to read through some sections of the Book of Common Prayer, including the Catechism (p. 845 - 862) and the ordination vows (pages 531 -532 for the priesthood, pages 543-544 for the diaconate). The conversation should then focus on what gifts the Nominee brings to ministry, and what vision for ministry the Nominee has in mind.

Suggested Questions…

- If a newcomer to the Church asked you about Christian ministry, how would you describe it? How would you describe the ministry of the whole Body of Christ? How would you describe the differences between the ministries of lay persons, deacons, and priests? How have you seen those differences lived out in your own experience?
- What gifts do you have for ministry? Describe an instance where those gifts were put to use in the Church. Were they used well? Why or why not? Tell us how your gifts were developed in this faith community. What gifts do you see in the other people in the LDG?
- What other vocations are you living out in your life? Are you called to teach, or to be a spouse or a parent? How do you know this is a true vocation?
- Give an example of how you live out your baptismal ministry currently. Why would ordination be a truer representation of your gifts for ministry? What could you do as a priest or deacon that you cannot do as a lay minister, and why would that matter to you, the Church, and to God?
- Tell us the story of your call. When did it start? Who was involved in it or influenced it? What important conversation partners have you had (including books or passages from scripture).

Things to Think About…

- Can the Nominee talk about the ordained ministry in a clear and compelling way? How does he/she/they understand the unique qualities of each ministry? What does he/she/they still have to learn?
- What experiences have been most meaningful to this Nominee in his/her/their vocational life so far? What do they tell you about his/her/their call?
- What do you hear in the Nominee's story? Does he/she/they talk easily about his/her/their relationship with Jesus Christ and with God's place in his/her/their call?
- How does the Nominee articulate his/her/their call? With joy? Hesitation? Reluctance? Passion?

At the conclusion of this meeting, the group should confirm the order for which they think the Nominee is in discernment: the priesthood or the diaconate. The group should then commit to reading the examination and ordination vows for that order together at each of the following meetings. This does not, however, mean that the question of other kinds of calls cannot still be addressed. In fact, this is one of the chief tasks of the LDG–to determine not only if the Nominee is called, but to which order of ministry he/she/they are called. There may be the discovery during the course of your meetings that the Nominee is actually called to a different order. If at some point it becomes clear that the Nominee is truly called to be a deacon instead of a priest or vice versa, the group should adjust their work together accordingly.

The following resource may be helpful: "Qualities We Seek in a Deacon" and "Qualities We Seek in a Priest"

Qualities We Seek in a Deacon

Since the ministry of a deacon is quite dynamic and varied, no single list of qualities will be comprehensive across the width and breadth of the Church. Indeed, while the Book of Common Prayer reminds us that deacons are called to a "special ministry of servanthood directly under your bishop [serving] all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely," we understand that this will be shaped by both the gifts of the deacon and the context in which they live, work, and serve. Knowing that seekers come to discernment at varying stages of life, we fully anticipate that in a younger candidate these qualities may be in "seed" form. In a more mature person, we would anticipate these qualities should also be more mature. But overall, there are some qualities which are often found in the members of this ancient order of ministry.

While these are not comprehensive, these are the qualities which a person seeking the diaconate will embody:

1. **Passionate leaders for servant ministry and justice**
   The deacon will be a truth-teller reminding the church of the needs, concerns, hopes, and dreams of the world around us — an inspiration to serve others. Deacons act as fearless role models that help others see and experience the transformation which comes from serving others in God's name.

2. **Passionate Gospel storyteller**
   The deacon will be grounded in the Gospel, have an authentic desire to continually proclaim the Word, learn from it, and teach others our faith stories. Having a foundation in Scripture and practical theology, deacons help others to see God's hand at work in the world around us and call everyone to the sacred work of serving others.

3. **Humble, spiritual practitioners who can lead and organize others**
   The deacon will be a person of spiritual maturity who practices self-care and understands boundaries — both personal and communal. Possessing a caring and compassionate center, the deacon is an empathetic, steady, and peaceful presence in the world and in the faith community.

4. **Flexible and effective communicators in community**
   The deacon will embody active listening. Deacons discern and empower baptismal ministry finding creative ways to call communities into God's ongoing mission in the world. Through community engagement with local and faith groups, deacons maintain a focus on community as a way to live into God's dream for the world.

5. **Spiritual maturity, self-awareness, and authenticity**
   The work of the Episcopal diaconate is challenging. It requires a strong spiritual center, physical and mental stamina, healthy personal boundaries, and a willingness to grow and learn alongside others. Effective clergy must be able to persevere in challenging circumstances, recognize their personal growth edges, and be willing to learn new skills and ask for help.

6. **Entrepreneurial leadership**
   We seek Nominees who are able to take risks and try new things in ministry. Twenty-first century clergy need creativity, the capacity to discern new paths, and the willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. Entrepreneurial leaders see opportunities where others see decline; possibilities where others see insurmountable challenges.

Qualities We seek in a Priest

The qualities listed below are not meant to be an exhaustive list, and we do not anticipate that every potential priest exhibits every quality. Knowing that seekers come to discernment at varying stages of life, we fully anticipate that in a younger candidate, these qualities may be in "seed" form. In a more mature person, we would anticipate these qualities would also be more mature. Likewise, we hope to recruit future priests that represent the diversity of our region in terms of race, gender, orientation, and language. We would anticipate that some of these qualities manifest themselves differently in different contexts.

1. **Passion for the Gospel**
   Priests proclaim the Good News of God in Christ, and they interpret the Gospel for their specific context. A priest helps the congregation understand its own story in terms of God's saving acts in history and helps a congregation see God's saving grace active in its common life.

2. **Prayerful Commitment to Spiritual Practice and Sacramental Life**
   "As the deer longs for the water-brooks, so longs my soul for you, O God." Psalm 42 describes a holy longing for God. In the life of a priest, a degree of structure should develop to regularly engage in prayer, the sacraments, and study. A potential priest should feel the centrality of the sacraments in their life and the life of the community. Such a commitment is critical to the ongoing health of clergy in the demanding work of church leadership.

3. **Ability to Lead, Organize, and Equip Others in Ministry**
   Many people are drawn to the priesthood for the love of ministry—pastoral care, teaching, service, and speaking out for justice. The predominant model of ministry in most Episcopal churches is that of one minister (the priest) ministering to all the people, or at the center of the Church's ministry. We seek a new paradigm, of clergy able to equip others for meaningful Christian lives and vocations, inviting others into the life of Christian community and ministry. It will require community organizing skills and the ability to identify and mentor new leaders.

4. **Clear and Effective Communication**
   We need priests who are willing to speak other languages to help the church reach into areas and cultures not currently well-served by our tradition. We are looking for priests who will be effective preachers in the pulpit, on the street corner, and online.

5. **Spiritual Maturity, Awareness, and Authenticity**
   The work of the Episcopal priesthood is challenging. It requires a strong spiritual center, physical and mental stamina, healthy personal boundaries, and a willingness to grow and learn alongside others. Effective clergy must be able to persevere in challenging circumstances, recognize their personal growth edges, and be willing to learn new skills and ask for help.

6. **Non-anxious caring presence**
   Priesthood invites a person into the center of a community, and to the holy moments in individual lives. Priests are summoned to hospitals, and to lead difficult meetings about the future of organizations. As such, we seek leaders who are comfortable in their own skin, and who can bring wisdom, care, and grace to others during life's great joys and sorrows.

7. **Collaboration**
   An effective priest seeks to build up a community of peers in ministry. While the priest has a specific and central call to preach and preside, they should be eager to share the limelight, and to distribute leadership humbly and effectively so that the whole church might live into its vocation of ministry.

8. **A Passion for Service and Justice**
   While this quality is the hallmark of the diaconate, it is also important for priests. For priests this passion may come with a particular nuance, a desire to ask questions about how the systems might be more just, and how scripture and sacrament might sustain the community's engagement in the world.

9. **Entrepreneurial Leadership**
   We seek individuals who are able to take risks and try new things in ministry. Twenty-first

century clergy need creativity, the capacity to discern new paths, and the willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. Entrepreneurial leaders see opportunities where others see decline; possibilities where others see insurmountable challenges.

10. **Courage and Vocational Flexibility**
    We find ourselves at a pivotal moment in the life of the church as an institution. The Diocese of Lexington cannot guarantee full-time employment, a pension, and benefits to every priest we ordain. Some priests will have to sustain their church work with secular employment. Many of our institutions are coming to moments of critical discernment about their future. We need priests who meet this challenge with courage and a sense of excitement. We need clergy who are willing to work together with the laity to plot out the future, to plant new missional communities, and to expand ministry possibilities.
11. **The ability to lead congregations through change**
    The majority of our congregations face significant adaptive challenges. This generation of clergy will lead our congregations through the wilderness of life as it has been to the Promised Land to which God calls us. As with our spiritual ancestors, there is a process of transformation required of us on the journey, as well as the ability to adapt to new ways of being the Church. Our clergy will help lead the way, in faithfulness to God's call and in the challenging work of change.

What do you notice? What do you see here that is the same or different from the Book of Common Prayer descriptions (BCP p 856)? What charisms stick out to you in particular as meeting the needs of a changed and changing church and world?

Meeting 3 Spirituality and Faith

Includes: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: Isaiah 55:6 -11; Philippians 4:4-9; or Gal 2:16-21

Assignment for the Nominee: Write your own Rule of Life. What are the practices you employ now for discipline and growth in your life of faith? If you do not already have a Rule of Life, begin to craft what that Rule needs to be as you move forward from this point in the process. For guidance, please see the following resource: https://www.ssje.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Living-Intentionally.pdf

Or...

Write a sermon for your congregation on the importance of having a Rule of Life. What scripture passages would this sermon use as its foundation? What would you encourage your congregants to consider as they craft a Rule of Life, and how would you recommend they go about doing so? What are the parameters of such a rule for us as disciples of Jesus Christ?

The first and most important criterion in discernment of ministry is the faith of the Nominee. Those who are considering ordination must love God with heart, mind, and soul, and must know and love the person of Jesus Christ and seek to make him known. There are many ways the LDG can gain a sense of the depth of the Nominee's faith life and discipleship. Remember, the group has already shared deep spiritual stories in the second meeting. At this meeting, the group may wish to have a discussion of each member's current faith practices. The group will also gain a deep sense of the integration of the Nominee's faith life from the way he/she/they answer other questions. For example, if the Nominee brings a discussion of discipleship, his/her/their prayer life, or another such reference into the discussion, it may speak just as loudly as the direct answers to questions asked about spirituality.

Suggested Questions

- Talk about your Rule of Life. How has it changed? Why is it important for you? Tell us about a time when you felt your Rule supporting and transforming your life.
- Imagine that someone new to the church asked you who Jesus is. What would you say? Be specific and personal in your response.
- Tell us about your relationship with the Book of Common Prayer. How do you use it in your prayer life? Tell us of a time when you found the BCP to be uplifting, or challenging, or both.
- How often do you read the Bible? How do you read the Bible? How would you describe the Bible and its place in the Church's life? What does the Bible have to offer to people who are non-church-goers?
- What questions do you still have about your faith? About Jesus? About the Church? What do you do with these questions?
- Tell us about your work with your Spiritual Director. Tell us, as much as you are able, of a time when that work was transformative in your relationship to yourself, your neighbors, or God.

Things to Think About

- How well does the Nominee articulate an understanding of the faith expressed in Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer? (See the Catechism, BCP p.845).
- What evidence of having a personal relationship with God do all the members of the LDG give in word and deed? …does the Nominee give in word and deed?
- Has the Nominee done any teaching in the faith community? If so, how well did this teaching instruct and inspire other parishioners?
- What has each member, including the Nominee, established as his/her/their Rule of Life and how successfully is it followed? What benefits are derived from it?
- What did you hear the Nominee say about his/her/their continuing questioning, searching, and probing the mysteries of the faith?
- How do the Nominee's specific prayer practices shape his/her/their life? How would they support him/her/them in a life of ordained ministry?
- How does the Nominee relate to his/her/their spiritual director? How is this practice supporting his/her/their discernment?

Meeting 4 Growth and Maturity

Includes: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: Philippians 2:1-8

Assignment for the Nominee: Write a two-page paper on growth in your life. How do you grow intellectually? How do you grow spiritually? What are the challenges to your growth in either of these areas? Include an example of a period in your life when you saw clear growth of some kind in yourself.

Or...

Write a poem or a song describing an important period of growth in your life. What were the circumstances that led to the growth? How did that period feel? Where did you feel Christ walking beside you during that time?

The ordination process demands growth in multiple areas of a person's life - spiritual, intellectual, and emotional. This meeting is intended to get at the potential for growth that lies within the Nominee in all these realms.

Formation for ordination often includes graduate level education that requires the ability to understand and analyze complex ideas, speak articulately, write clearly, and be open to new concepts. The ordained priest or deacon must have a lifelong commitment to learning and personal growth.

Growth in the ordination process, of course, is not limited to intellectual growth. The process of forming priests and deacons should also lead to profound personal, emotional, and spiritual growth. This process of intentional discernment should help members of the LDG and the Nominee become more of who they were created to be - mature, self-differentiated children of God who are aware of their strengths and their challenges and also of what they need in their lives to support their work, prayer, and play. Remember, your work here is not to analyze the Nominee in a clinical way, but simply to consider how his/her/their character, maturity, and integrity lends itself to life as an ordained person in the Church.

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your intellectual life. Do you enjoy writing? Reading? Speaking in public? Describe an experience of academic work that has been particularly rewarding or challenging for you.
- Are you looking forward to seminary or other coursework in pursuit of ordination? Why or why not? What hopes do you have for this work?
- Tell us of a recent time when you learned something important about yourself. How did this realization occur? What impact did it have on your life?
- In what areas - intellectual, emotional, spiritual, or other - do you hope to grow in the coming years? Why? What impact would that growth have on your life as an ordained

person?

- Describe a time in your life when you were under intense emotional stress. What were the circumstances? How did you handle it? How did you pray about it? What did you learn, and what mistakes did you make? Where were the places you found support during this time?
- How do you balance and integrate your work and free time now? Give us an example of when you had to make a difficult decision regarding this balance.
- How do you take care of yourself? What activities or practices feed your soul? What are the most important practices of love of self for you to take into this process of discernment?

Things to Think About

- What evidence do you see for the Nominee's capacity to learn?
- How well is the Nominee's writing that you've seen so far able to express clear and compelling thought?
- How open is he/she/they to questioning, self-exploration, and reality testing? What openness have you seen during the sessions? When and how have you seen the Nominee grapple with a difficult issue and emerge with a new viewpoint?
- What evidence is there of his/her/their continuing commitment to learning and intellectual growth?
- How have personal and spiritual growth been apparent in the Nominee's life in the past? What challenges to growth has he/she/they experienced in the past? What challenges do they experience now? What inhibits the ability to grow?
- How do you see the Nominee growing during the course of this discernment process? How do you see growth in each other?
- Does the Nominee have a realistic view of the world or of his/her/their own self?
- How aware is he/she/they of her/his/their own feelings? How have you seen him/her/them express this understanding?
- How have you heard the Nominee talk about working under pressure, dealing with stress, or managing conflicting demands?
- Does the Nominee have a level of maturity and ability to adapt that is commensurate with his/her/their chronological age? How do you know this? What have you seen him/her/them do that makes you feel this way?
- Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable around this person? Is this because of your own life and history, or is it something else?

Meeting 5 Relationships

Includes: all LDG members, the Nominee in discernment, and the Nominee's spouse or partner. Unmarried or unpartnered Nominees may choose to bring in a friend or family member to help them discuss this topic.

Scripture for the Day: I Corinthians 13

Assignment for the Nominee: Write a two-page paper on how you foresee this process impacting your relationships, particularly with your spouse, but also with your friends and family of origin. What will be the blessing there? What are the challenges? What would you and your spouse need to help make this kind of transition?

Or...

Conduct and record a series of interviews with your spouse, partner, or other key person in your life. Ask them about the impact this discernment is having on their own identity and spirituality. What are they most excited about in this process? What do they most fear? What are they learning about themselves as they watch the Nominee discern and grow? Bring the recording to the meeting or write it up as an interview as if for a church newsletter.

If the Nominee has a spouse or partner, it is important that the LDG meet with him/her/them to discern whether he/she/they are supportive of the Nominee's pursuit of a vocation as a priest or a deacon. This should be a gentle and joyful conversation in which the spouse or partner's feelings and desires for the future of the union with the Nominee are foremost.

Suggested Questions for the Nominee and Guest

- What gifts for ministry do you see in your spouse? How can you see your spouse or partner as a Deacon or Priest? Why?
- How do you imagine your time together will change during the ordination process? Once your spouse/partner is ordained?
- How will your finances change because of this process?
- Are you enthusiastic about this new chapter of your lives together? Fearful? Fearfully enthusiastic?
- Are you (the Spouse or partner) an active member of your church? If so, how do you imagine your role in the church changing once your spouse or partner is ordained? If you are not an active member of your church, how do you imagine your role in your spouse or partner's church once he/she/they are ordained?
- What resources do you have as a couple to help you in this process? What additional resources might you need during the period of formation or early ordained ministry?
- How do you both care for each other? How do you care for yourselves? How might this practice of care change and grow in the years to come?
- If you have children, how have you seen this vocation of parenthood manifested in your lives? Is this something to which you feel called - either now or in the future? Tell us of a

time when you have felt God's presence in this part of your lives.

- Outside of your primary relationship, what other relationships sustain and support you both? Give an example of a time when one of these relationships was of particular importance to you in your life.
- Are there relationships in your life that you would like to cultivate more? Tell the group of your hopes regarding these new or newly important relationships. It might also be helpful to ask the Nominee questions about future relationships, including:
- Do you hope to find a romantic partner someday, or do you think you may be called to a celibate life?
- What challenges and opportunities might ordination present to meeting someone to share your life with? What questions would you have of that person when you begin dating?
- What are your hopes for your primary relationships in the future? What would be the greatest blessing for you in this area of your life?

Things to Think About

- How does the Nominee talk about his/her/their primary relationships? How does he/she/they describe their importance, their challenges?
- Do you see evidence that the Nominee has a pattern of healthy relationships in his/her/their life? Destructive ones? Has he/she/they demonstrated the ability to get help with relationships when needed?
- How could the pattern of this Nominee's household be seen as a sign of faithful discipleship and of the presence of God?
- Are there areas of the Nominee's life that you would recommend he/she/they speak with the Bishop about?

Note: It is important to remember that the LDG is not a therapy group. The point of these questions about relationships is simply to see how the Nominee's relationships impact his/her/their discernment to a holy vocation. There may be elements of his/her/their life that are necessarily off-limits to a group like the LDG. In this case, the Nominee should discuss these issues directly with his/her/their Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon or with the Bishop. It is true that the whole of the Nominee's life is important when discerning a vocation to the ordained ministry; it is also true that the whole of that life might not be open to discussion with the LDG. The COM and the Canon to the Ordinary can be helpful in this area; please feel free to call on them if necessary.

Meeting 6 Leadership, Collaboration, and Communication

Includes: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: Isaiah 50:4-5 or John 13:12-18

Assignment for the Nominee: Write a two-page reflection on your leadership project in the faith community. What has gone well? What felt natural? What were the challenges? What have you learned about the faith community and about yourself? Include a potential evaluation tool that you could provide to those with whom you served.

Or...

Create a video presentation that reflects your leadership in your faith community. Include interviews with those with whom you served. Imagine that this is something you might put on a faith community website to publicize a particular ministry or mission.

Holy leadership and the capacity for collaborative work and good communication are essential for persons entering ordained ministry. Under the Sponsoring Priest's direction, the Nominee will be completing a ministry project as one of the steps in the discernment process. As the project takes shape, the LDG should reflect on this experience in the life of the Nominee and the congregation to gain additional insights into the Nominee's qualifications for leadership and collaborative ministry. It will be helpful to identify the actions taken by the Nominee, what leadership was demonstrated, how effective it was, other possibilities that might have been tried, and the ability of the Nominee to evaluate his/her/their own work. Another approach to assess leadership skills might be the use of case studies with role playing to allow for the Nominee to give examples of how he/she/they might act within a situation that a deacon or priest might realistically encounter. A critical part of good leadership is good communication. Knowing one's own communication preferences and styles is vitally important in gaining the appropriate trust and openness in communication with others.

Some of the group's conversation in this meeting should be about the Nominee's communication style, along with his/her/their gifts and challenges in this area.

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your leadership project in your faith community. What has been the greatest joy for you in this work, and the greatest challenge? Why? What have you learned about yourself in this work? How have you experienced God in this work? Give us an example of your experience and how it informs your understanding of yourself and of Christian leadership.
- Tell us of a time when you helped someone in your life to discern a call or a spiritual gift. How did you empower him/her/them to claim his/her/their spiritual gifts and resources?
- Tell us of the leadership styles of various people you've known or worked with. How did these styles work for you? Are they similar or different to your own style? Are they helpful

or harmful to the Church? Why?
- Tell us of a time when you collaborated on a project or a ministry. What did you enjoy about that experience? What was difficult about it? How do you imagine collaborating with others when you are a deacon or a priest? What would be the same, and what would be different? Why?
- Describe a time when you had to claim your authority, in school, work, or in ministry. Was that easy for you? Challenging? What did this teach you about yourself?
- Describe a time when you had to lead in a creative or new way. What was that experience like for you?
- Describe a time when something you worked on failed. What was that experience like for you? What did you learn from that experience? Is that something you see as having value in the Church? Why or why not?

Things to Think About

- How does the Nominee describe making important decisions that will affect others as well as herself/himself/themself? How will this process serve him/her/them well in ordained leadership? How will it be challenging?
- Does the Nominee demonstrate initiative, appropriate self-confidence, enthusiasm, flexibility, and creativity?
- Have you seen evidence that he/she/they can motivate and inspire others?
- Is she/he/they aware of and at ease with a variety of leadership styles and able to use them as the situation indicates?
- How comfortable is she/he/they with being a person in whom authority rests? To what extent is he/ she/they ready to claim and use that authority appropriately?
- How has her/his/their leadership already been evidenced in prior or current lay ministries in school, work, or church settings?
- How do other people respond to his/her/their leadership?
- How does she/he/they describe the leadership of others?
- Does the Nominee express ideas clearly, both in speaking and in writing?
- What listening skills does the Nominee make use of? How do I feel when he/she/they are listening to me?
- Can the Nominee read other people's non-verbal cues accurately and tailor a response of appropriate length and complexity?
- When dealing with his/her/their feelings, do the Nominee's physical gestures and movements (body language) match the words spoken?
- Does he/she/they listen thoughtfully, or does he/she/they sometimes interrupt, override, or attempt to verbally dominate others? Does the Nominee take the time to listen to each person and respond appropriately?

Meeting 7 Final Meeting

Include: all LDG members and the Nominee in discernment

Scripture for the Day: Isaiah 43:1-4a

Assignment for the Nominee: Write a two-page paper outlining your learning from this process.

Or...

Create a lesson plan for an adult forum at your faith community about this experience. What would be the most important things to communicate about your discernment? Where have you seen the Holy Spirit at work in this process? What has this process taught you about yourself, your faith community, and the Church? Be specific and include both your own learnings and perceptions as well as questions you would ask the congregation to engage them in their own reflection.

This meeting should serve both as a kind of catch-all meeting as well as a time for reflection. If there are topics of discussion that you feel you need to flesh out more fully, or questions that still need to be asked, now is the time to do so. This meeting, though, should also provide you with time to reflect upon your learning. In this time together, what have you learned about yourselves? The Church? The Nominee? Take the time to discuss together your next steps moving forward- are there changes you'd like to make in your life? Do you hear the Holy Spirit calling you to something new? What is the most important thing you are taking away from this time?

This is a time to celebrate! The LDG and the Nominee have undertaken this important and holy work for months now, and you should take the time to say thank you to each other and to God. Enjoy this time together and show your appreciation in the best way you know how.

Meeting 8: LDG Report Meeting

Includes: all LDG members, without the Nominee

Scripture for the Day: I Corinthians 12:4-13 or Romans 12:3-11

Assignment for the LDG: Review all of the writing that has been done so far.

The purpose of the evaluation session is to review the progress to date and come to a decision and recommendation about the call of the Nominee, as well as to finalize the statements for the written report of the LDG.

After many sessions of discussion, you likely have developed a more intimate knowledge of how each LDG member views him/her/themself, how each views the world and his/her/their relationships in it, the talents and skills each person possesses, how each contributes to and relates to his/her/their faith community, and especially how each person functions in relation to God.

Now it is time to consider what type of ministry you feel would be appropriate for the Nominee in this period in his/her/their life.

Ask yourselves, "Can I envision this person as a priest or a deacon? ...as my priest or deacon?" If you have some feeling that you would not be able to turn to the Nominee as your priest or deacon, your feelings should be explored with the group. This feeling may indicate that there is some hesitation within the group about the Nominee's proceeding toward ordination; however, this is not always the case. These feelings may also indicate that the Nominee is in fact called to ordination but in a new and groundbreaking way. The committee needs to be careful not to think only in terms of their particular faith community ministry. There are many types of faith communities, and a variety of positions for priests and deacons that are not associated with faith communities. LDG members must also be very careful to keep their own biases and personal preferences in check.

Ask yourselves, "Do we want to present the Nominee to the Vestry and Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon?" If you have reservations, decide whether or not the areas of doubt include skills, experience, or characteristics that have a reasonable potential for improvement. If so, state your reservations clearly in the report with your recommendation to either delay the process or to go ahead with the understanding that there are areas for continued work. It could be that there is a very real possibility that the person is called to serve as a lay minister. If it becomes very difficult for the members to make such a decision, or if they are still unsure of their recommendation, consult with your Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and then, if necessary, with the Chair of the COM.

Discuss from a broad point of view what changes in your attitudes or concepts of Christian ministry have occurred in these meetings. Perhaps some LDG members would like to share these perceptions with the congregation (remembering to preserve confidentiality) through a newsletter article or a discussion at the adult forum.

A formal report to the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Vestry should be composed in the format provided by the Offices of the Bishop (Addendum 9). It is very helpful to the Bishop, the COM, and the Standing Committee if you state the group's opinions clearly in your report and explain any reservations or difficulties in coming to your final decision. The report should be read to the Nominee by a minimum of two people from the LDG before it is presented to the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and to the Vestry. It may be necessary to assist the Nominee to recognize that the LDG understands his/her/their call differently than he/she/they envision it. Explain how you understand the call, with both its challenges and areas of satisfaction. Reiterate the Nominee's gifts and talents as they have been revealed to you and relate them to the call as you see it, and call on your Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon for counsel and support.

Completing Your LDG Service

As a member of an LDG, you have served the Nominee, the faith community, the diocese, and the wider church in an important way. Your report will be passed on to the Bishop, COM and Standing Committee. We hope you realize how much your service is valued by them. At the same time, we ask you to understand that your recommendation is only one part of a broader discernment process. Others involved in the various stages of this process also seek to discern God's will for the Nominee.

At times Nominees recommended by an LDG are redirected to another ministry or delayed at later stages of the discernment process. We know how disheartening it is when this happens to someone in whom you have invested a lot of time. It is especially important that you trust the process and see all those involved in discernment as persons who are continuing the discernment process you began in the faith community. You can be of most help to the Nominee by guiding him/her/them to see and consider the prayerful wisdom of others, and by continuing to support him/her/them in the coming months and years.

Addendum 9
Local Discernment Group Report

Name of Nominee: _____

Nominee's Congregation and City: _____

Report Date: _____

Dates the Committee met (month/day/year): _____

(The following questions are offered as a guide to the Local Discernment Group. Each Nominee and Local Discernment Group is different. The committee, working with the Nominee, should adapt this form to communicate the experience of discernment and the call of the Nominee. Concise answers given in some detail are most helpful.)

SECTION I

Instructions: This section should reflect the consensus of the LDG. Please offer specific examples as appropriate. Please type.

1. How does the Nominee understand what it means to be a baptized Christian?
2. Describe the Nominee's spiritual life and regular spiritual disciplines.
3. How has the Nominee expressed his/her/their faith in the life of his/her/their community of faith?
4. How has the Nominee manifested his/her/their faith in life outside of the church?
5. How has the Nominee shown qualities of leadership in his/her/their life?
6. How has the Nominee shown qualities of leadership in the community of faith?
7. What are the Nominee's greatest strengths (in skills, experience, and passions)?
8. What aspect of the Nominee's life, work and passions most excites you with regard to their future ministries in the church?
9. What are the Nominee's opportunities for growth?
10. What would holy orders add to the Nominee's ability to live into his/her/their life as a Christian?
11. How would holy orders limit the Nominee's future ministry, especially given that he/she/they are likely to be asked to leave his/her/their home congregation?
12. Are there any additional issues that you would like to include in this report?

SECTION II

The LDG believes, after prayer and reflection,

- that the Nominee possesses charisms that are best manifested in the order of the Laity;
- that the Nominee possesses charisms which are best manifested in the Priesthood;
- that the Nominee possesses charisms which are best manifested in the Diaconate; or
- that the Nominee has a call that will require further exploration with the Bishop.

SECTION III

I have read and understood the Report. I pray that I will take it to heart and understand that discernment is a lifelong process.

Signature of Nominee _____ Date: _____

Local Discernment Group

Signatures:	Printed Names:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Date: _____

Addendum 10
Discernment Exercise Outside Local Faith Community

If the Nominee is invited to attend the second meeting with COM, the Bishop will arrange a two-month discernment exercise outside the local faith community for the Nominee to be completed prior to the second meeting.

Please note that Safe Church training must be completed prior to the commencement of the discernment exercise.

- If Nominee is discerning a call to the vocational Diaconate, the outside faith community will ideally have an active deacon.
- The Supervising Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and the Canon to the Ordinary will create a discernment exercise plan in consultation with the Supervising priest that both challenges and supports the Nominee in his/her/their continuing discernment.
  The supervising Rector/Priest-in-Charge will meet regularly with the Nominee during the discernment exercise
- The Supervising Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will convene a small group of lay persons from the faith community to meet regularly with the Nominee to provide feedback.
- At the conclusion of the discernment exercise, and no later than one month prior to the second COM meeting, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will provide the Offices of the Bishop a report that includes:
    - The tasks/projects undertaken by Nominee
    - An assessment of Nominee's experience in the faith community (what worked well, what didn't work well, what were the growth areas for Nominee).
- At the conclusion of the discernment exercise, and no later than one month prior to second COM meeting, the **Nominee** will provide the Offices of the Bishop a report that includes:
    - The tasks/projects undertaken by Nominee.
    - His/her/their assessment of the discernment exercise (what worked well, what didn't work well, what was learned, what was challenging, how have you grown?)

Addendum 11
Psychological Packet

Nominees request the packet of information and forms for completion from the Offices of the Bishop.

All forms are to be sent to the Offices of the Bishop, at which time Nominees will be directed to the Diocesan psychologist.

Reports of all examinations will be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent Diocesan record per church canons.

Addendum 12
Medical Examination and Background Check

Nominees are asked to complete a full medical examination by any licensed physician.
Please request the medical form from the Offices of the Bishop and return the completed form. A licensed physician must assess whether or not the Nominee is in his/her/their opinion fit for ordained ministry and must sign the attestation on the last page of the medical form.

Nominees are also asked to complete a Background Check.
To activate the Background Check, please email your full name, address and phone number to the Missioner for Operations and Finance, Kat Luchtefeld, at katl@diolex.org. The Subject line should read "Background Check".

Reports of all examinations and background checks will be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent Diocesan record per church canons.

Addendum 13
Application for Postulancy

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

I hereby apply for admission as a postulant for Holy Orders. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain and see that you receive all necessary documentation for my application to be considered, and I have personally reviewed the canons as to those responsibilities. These materials include but are not limited to:

- LDG Report
- Discernment Exercise Report from Supervising Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon
- Psychological Examination report
- Medical Examination report
- Background Check
- Reports from COM
- Reports from Standing Committee

I understand that, if admitted to postulancy, I may be removed as a Postulant at the sole discretion of the Bishop.

I ask you prayers and seek your guidance.

Faithfully,

_____
Signature of applicant

_____
Printed Name

_____
Date

Addendum 14
Vestry Letter of Support for Postulancy

To the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Lexington:

In accordance with Title III, Canon 6, Section 2 (a) 1-2, and Canon 8, Sec. 2 (a) 1-2, of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, the Vestry of _____ Church, in _____,

Kentucky, in the Diocese of Lexington, certifies that _____ is a communicant in good standing of the congregation.

The Vestry supports this person for Postulancy and believes that he/she/they possess such qualifications as would be fitting for admission as a Postulant for Holy Orders.

We pledge to contribute financially to the education and formation process for ordination to the

_____. Date _____

Signatures of at least two thirds of the Vestry and Signature of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, this form will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.)

Certification by the Clerk of the Vestry

I hereby certify that the foregoing letter was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ Church, duly convened on the _____ day of _____ , and that the signatures are those of all, or a two-thirds majority, of the members of the Vestry.

_____ Clerk of the Vestry

Addendum 15
Commission on Ministry Recommendation for Postulancy

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

The Commission on Ministry has received the application of _____ to become a postulant for [the diaconate/priesthood] and has met with him/her/them as well as reviewed other relevant material.

_____
Applicant Name

_____
Diaconate/Priesthood

_____
Meeting dates

_____
Do/Do Not recommend

We (do/do not) recommend admission as a postulant at this time.
(Additional details or further recommendations may be added.)

_____
Chair, Commission on Ministry

_____
Date

Addendum 16
Admission as Postulant

(on diocesan letterhead)

Date _____

Name _____

Address line 1 _____

Address line 2 _____

Dear _____

I hereby admit you as a Postulant for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Lexington effective the date hereof.

I wish to remind you of the obligation to communicate with my by letter during the Ember Weeks (see page 18 of the Book of Common Prayer as to the dates thereof.) I also assure you of my prayers during your time of formation for ordained ministry in the Church.

Faithfully,

_____

Bishop of Lexington

cc: Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon
Chair, Commission on Ministry
President, Standing Committee

Addendum 17

Financial Assessment and Planning Guide for Nominees to Holy Orders

Name: _____ Date: _____

Number of dependents: _____ Number of incomes in the family: _____

Current Income and Assets

Current Income

Your Salary	$ _____
Benefits	$ _____
Total	$ _____
Family Salary	$ _____
Benefits	$ _____
Total	$ _____
Other	$ _____
Total Income:	$ _____

Current Assets

Market value of real estate	$_____
Market value of auto	$_____
Cash value of life insurance	$_____
Value of stock/bonds	$_____
Value of trust fund	$_____
Value of savings, retirement accounts, rental property; please specify on the back of the form	$_____
Total Assets:	$ _____
Total Income and Assets:	$_____

Current Indebtedness and Expenses

Indebtedness:

Balance on mortgages	$_____
Balance on car loans	$_____
Balance on educational loan(s)	$_____
Charge account balances	$_____
Other	$_____
Total Indebtedness:	$_____

Expenses

Average monthly household expenses x 12	$_____
Number of dependents _____	
Number of incomes _____	
Other major expenses not included above (tuition, taxes)	$_____

Total Annual Expenses:	$_____
Total Indebtedness and Expense:	$_____

Future Planning

Costs of a theological education (whether traditional residential seminary or other)

How much do you expect it will cost? (tuition, room and board, travel, moving, other expenses) per year? For three years?	$_____
How much of your current income will you not have available while you are in seminary?	$_____
What financial resources are available to help you pay for your education and living expenses while you are in seminary?	$_____
Do you expect to apply for scholarships or other assistance? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what amount?	$_____
How will you pay for your education and living expenses while you are in school?	$_____
Do you expect to incur debt? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, How much?	$_____
Over what period of time do you expect to repay that debt?	$_____
What do you expect the monthly payments to be?	$_____

After ordination, how will you be able to make those payments, as well as other expenses?

What stress will these arrangements and expectation cause for your family?

Signature _____ Date: _____

The information on this form, as with all forms, is kept in the strictest of confidence. Nominees are asked to provide this information in order to demonstrate that they have a solid grasp on personal finances. This is a commitment to which you will likely be asked to contribute by underwriting some of your education on your own. It is important to note any potential significant financial impediments to your education and formation. Again, please be assured that we never misuse any personal information and keep it secure.

Addendum 18
Declaration of Formation and Education Plan

_____ (name) plans to apply to the following seminaries:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature _____ Date _____

OR

_____ (name) will contact the Chair of the Committee on Ordination Education and Formation to establish an education and formation plan.

Signature _____ Date _____

FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL:

Safe Church Training to be completed: _____
Must be completed prior to beginning the Discernment Exercise Outside Local Faith Community

Anti-racism training to be completed: _____

Constitutions and Canons/Title IV Training to be completed: _____

Clinical Pastoral Education to be completed: _____

Addendum 19
Seminary Report of Progress/COEF Mid-Study Report

Date _____

Nominee's Name _____

Seminary Report of Progress for those in a Master of Divinity Program

In the fall semester of the Middler year, halfway into the Master of Divinity program, MDiv students undergo a comprehensive evaluation based on all classroom and field education work up to that point. This evaluation allows faculty members to assess the students' readiness to complete the program, examining in particular their sense of self and vocation, command of skills of ministry, and ability to integrate the practice and theology of ministry. In this report, the seminary makes a recommendation regarding progressing readiness for ordination.

That report will be attached to this addendum.

COEF Mid-Study Report

At around the mid-point in the formation and education process towards ordination for those working with the Committee on Ordination Education and Formation, the Bishop, assisted by the COEF, will determine what courses/programs/persons will best testify to the ongoing readiness of an individual for ordination and submit a report of mid-program readiness.

That report(s) will be attached to this addendum.

Addendum 20
Clinical Pastoral Education Evaluation

Date _____

Nominee's Name _____

Please attach the evaluation to this paper and submit to document, preferably in electronic form, to the Offices of the Bishop.

Addendum 21
Application for Candidacy

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

I hereby apply for admission as a Candidate for [the diaconate/priesthood]. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain and see that you receive all necessary documentation for my application to be considered, and I have personally reviewed the canons as to those requirements.

I also understand that, if admitted as a Candidate, I may be removed from the list of candidates at the sole discretion of the Bishop.

I was admitted as a postulant for Holy Orders on _____.

Faithfully,

_____
Signature of applicant

_____
Printed Name

_____
Date

Addendum 22
Vestry Letter of Support for Candidacy

To the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Lexington: In accordance with Title III, Canon 6, Section 6 (b. 2.) 1-2, and Title III Canon 8, Sec. 4 (a. 2.) of the Canons of The Episcopal Church,

The Vestry of _____ Church, in _____,

Kentucky, in the Diocese of Lexington, certifies that _____ is a communicant in good standing of the congregation.

The Vestry supports this person for Candidacy and believes that he/she/they possess such qualifications as would be fitting for admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders.

Date _____

Signatures of at least two thirds of the Vestry and Signature of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, this form will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.)

Certification by the Clerk of the Vestry

I hereby certify that the foregoing letter was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ Church, duly convened on the _____ day of _____ , and that the signatures are those of all, or a two-thirds majority, of the members of the Vestry.

_____ Clerk of the Vestry

Addendum 23
Commission on Ministry Recommendation for Candidacy

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

We [do/do not] recommend admission of _____ as a candidate at this time.

[additional details or further recommendations may be added.]

The Commission on Ministry attests to you that (name of applicant) is/is not successfully engaged in an ongoing process of formation for ministry as a (deacon/priest).

_____
Chair, Commission on Ministry

_____
Date

Addendum 24
Standing Committee Approval for Candidacy

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

The Standing Committee met with _____ on _____.
We approve of admitting him/her/them as a Candidate for [the Priesthood/Diaconate].

_____
President, Standing Committee

_____
Date

Addendum 25
Admission as Candidate

(diocesan letterhead)

Date _____

Name _____

Address line 1 _____

Address line 2 _____

Dear _____

Your application being complete, I hereby admit you as a Candidate for Holy Orders pursuant to Title III, Canon 6, Section 4 (b.) and Title III Canon 8, Sec. 4 (b.), of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

I assure you of my ongoing prayers, and I look forward to continuing to hear from you during Ember Weeks.

Faithfully,

_____

Bishop of Lexington

cc: Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon
Chair, Commission on Ministry
President, Standing Committee

Addendum 26
General Ordination Examination/Local GOE Registration

_____ will be registered for the General Ordination Examination on

_____
(date)

and/or a locally administered General Ordination Examination on _____.
(date)

Addendum 27
Application for Ordination to the Diaconate

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

I hereby apply to be ordained to the Diaconate. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain and see that you receive all necessary documentation for my application to be considered and I have personally reviewed the canons as to those requirements.

Full name (printed): _____

Date of admission to Postulancy: _____

Date of admission to Candidacy: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addendum 28
Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination as a Deacon

To the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Lexington: In accordance with Title III, Canon 6, Section 6 (b. 2.) and Canon 8, Sec. 6 (c), of the Canons of The Episcopal Church,

The Vestry of _____ Church, in _____,

Kentucky, in the Diocese of Lexington, certifies that _____ is a communicant in good standing of the congregation.

The Vestry supports this person for Ordination as a Deacon and believes that he/she/they possess such qualifications as would be fitting for admission to Holy Orders.

Date _____

Signatures of at least two thirds of the Vestry, Signature of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, this form will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.)

Certification by the Clerk of the Vestry

I hereby certify that the foregoing letter was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ Church, duly convened on the _____ day of _____ , and that the signatures are those of all, or a two-thirds majority, of the members of the Vestry.

_____ Clerk of the Vestry

Addendum 29
Commission on Ministry Recommendation for Ordination as a Deacon

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

The Commission on Ministry recommend that _____ be ordained a Deacon in Christ's Holy Catholic Church

_____
Chair, Commission on Ministry

_____
Date

Addendum 30
Approval of the Standing Committee for Ordination as a Deacon

To _____, Bishop of Lexington

We, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Lexington, having been duly convened at _____ at _____, do testify that _____, desiring to be ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.6, has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating _____'s preparedness for ordination to the Diaconate under Canon III.6; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination the Diaconate under Canon III.6 have been met; and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we recommend _____ for ordination.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this _____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord _____.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Addendum 31
Order for Ordination to the Diaconate

(diocesan letterhead)

Date _____

I do hereby take order for the Ordination of _____ to the Sacred Order of Deacons in Christ's Holy Catholic Church on _____ at _____ at _____ .

_____
Bishop of Lexington

cc: Ordinand
Chair, Commission on Ministry
President, Standing Committee
Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon

Addendum 32
Application for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

I hereby apply to be ordained to the Transitional Diaconate. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain and see that you receive all necessary documentation for my application to be considered and I have personally reviewed the canons as to those requirements.

Full name (printed): _____

Date of admission to Postulancy: _____

Date of admission to Candidacy: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addendum 33
Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination as a Transitional Deacon

To the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Lexington: In accordance with Title III, Canon 6, Section 6 (b) and Canon 8, Sec. 6 (c. 2.), of the Canons of The Episcopal Church,

The Vestry of _____Church, in _____,

Kentucky, in the Diocese of Lexington, certifies that

_____i

s a communicant in good standing of the congregation.

The Vestry supports this person for Ordination as a Deacon and believes that he/she/they possess such qualifications as would be fitting for admission to Holy Orders.

Date _____

Signatures of at least two thirds of the Vestry, Signature of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, this form will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.)

Certification by the Clerk of the Vestry

I hereby certify that the foregoing letter was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ Church, duly convened on the _____ day of _____ , and that the signatures are those of all, or a two-thirds majority, of the members of the Vestry.

_____ Clerk of the Vestry

Addendum 34
Commission on Ministry Recommendation for Ordination as a Transitional Deacon

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

The Commission on Ministry recommend that _____ be ordained a Transitional Deacon in Christ's Holy Catholic Church

_____
Chair, Commission on Ministry

_____
Date

Addendum 35
Approval of the Standing Committee for Ordination as a Transitional Deacon

To _____, Bishop of Lexington

We, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Lexington, having been duly convened at _____ at _____, do testify that _____, desiring to be ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.8, has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating _____'s preparedness for ordination to the Diaconate and Priesthood under Canon III.8; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination the Diaconate under Canon III.8 have been met; and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we recommend _____ for ordination.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this _____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord _____.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Addendum 36
Order for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

(diocesan letterhead)

Date _____

I do hereby take order for the Ordination of _____ to the Sacred Order of Deacons in Christ's Holy Catholic Church on _____ at _____ at _____ .

_____
Bishop of Lexington

cc: Ordinand
Chair, Commission on Ministry
President, Standing Committee
Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon

Addendum 37
Application for Ordination to the Priesthood

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

I hereby apply to be ordained to the Priesthood. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain and see that you receive all necessary documentation for my application to be considered and I have personally reviewed the canons as to those requirements.

Full name (printed): _____

Date of admission to Postulancy: _____

Date of admission to Candidacy: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addendum 38
Vestry Letter of Support for Ordination to the Priesthood

To the Bishop, the Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Lexington: In accordance with Title III, Canon 6, Section 6 (b) and Canon 8, Sec. 6 (c), of the Canons of The Episcopal Church,

The Vestry of _____ Church, in _____,

Kentucky, in the Diocese of Lexington, certifies that _____ is a communicant in good standing of the congregation.

The Vestry supports this person for Ordination as a Priest and believes that he/she/they possess such qualifications as would be fitting for admission to Holy Orders.

Date _____

Signatures of at least two thirds of the Vestry, Signature of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, this form will be signed by the Archdeacon of the Region.)

Certification by the Clerk of the Vestry

I hereby certify that the foregoing letter was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ Church, duly convened on the _____ day of _____ , and that the signatures are those of all, or a two-thirds majority, of the members of the Vestry.

_____ Clerk of the Vestry

Addendum 39
Commission on Ministry Recommendation for Ordination to the Priesthood

To _____ , Bishop of Lexington:

The Commission on Ministry recommend that _____ be ordained a Priest in Christ's Holy Catholic Church

_____
Chair, Commission on Ministry

_____
Date

Addendum 40
Approval of the Standing Committee for Ordination to the Priesthood

To _____, Bishop of Lexington

We, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Lexington, having been duly convened at _____ at _____, do testify that _____, desiring to be ordained to the Priesthood, has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating _____'s preparedness for ordination to the Priesthood; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met; and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we recommend _____ for ordination.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this _____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord _____.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Addendum 41
Order for Ordination to the Priesthood

(diocesan letterhead)

Date _____

I do hereby take order for the Ordination of _____ to the Sacred Order of Priests in Christ's Holy Catholic Church on _____ at _____ at _____ .

_____
Bishop of Lexington

cc: Ordinand
Chair, Commission on Ministry
President, Standing Committee
Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon

Complete Overview of the Discernment Process

Upon completion, please submit all forms and documents electronically to the Canon to the Ordinary in the Offices of the Bishop (amyc@diolex.org).

Initial Discernment: Local and Diocesan

- ❑ Nominee must be Baptized (in any Christian denomination, Confirmed or Received in the Episcopal Church, a communicant of good standing in a faith community of the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington, and 24 years of age or older prior to ordination to the Diaconate.
- ❑ Nominee will have been active in lay ministry in the faith community for at least a year, and ideally the Nominee and the Rector/Priest in Charge will have been in relationship for at least a year.
- ❑ Nominee enrolls in and completes Discernment 101.
- ❑ Nominee begins series of intentional, prayerful, guided conversation with Rector/Priest in Charge/Regional Archdeacon including materials in Addendum 1 and Addendum 4.
- ❑ Nominee complete Spiritual Autobiography (Addendum 2).
- ❑ Nominee interviews a Deacon and a Priest and completes essay (Addendum 3).
- ❑ Nominee and the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon will discuss the Expected Financial Costs of Discernment, Education, and Formation (Addendum 5).
- ❑ If the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon affirms that the Nominee should continue in the discernment process for ordained ministry, he/she/they complete Addendum 1 and Addendum 6 and forwards them to the Offices of the Bishop.
- ❑ Nominee completes Nominee Information Form (Addendum 7), Spiritual Autobiography (Addendum 2), and Nominee's reflection essay of the interviews with a priest and a deacon (Addendum 3) and forwards them to the Offices of the Bishop.
- ❑ Rector/Priest-in-Charge and Nominee request a meeting with the Bishop.
- ❑ If the Bishop approves the Nominee to continue discernment with a LDG, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon appoints an LDG in consultation with Nominee and contacts the chair of COM to schedule LDG training.
- ❑ The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon notifies the Vestry of the status of the Nominee including expected costs (Addendum 5) and the next steps involved with a LDG.
- ❑ The Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon provides copies of A Guide for Local Discernment Groups to its members and to the Nominee (Addendum 8).
- ❑ Before the LDG begins its work, the LDG, the Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon, Nominee and ideally a Vestry liaison meet with a LDG trainer from the COM for training. Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon should not be present at the LDG sessions other than the initial training.
- ❑ The Nominee provides the LDG with completed Spiritual Autobiography (Addendum 2).

- ❑ The LDG completes its work following the guidelines in Addendum 8. The LDG process should include at least 9 meetings including training and drafting of the report, and take at least six months.
- ❑ At any time after the six-month period, and at the conclusion of the Group's work, the convener of the LDG submits a completed Local Discernment Group Report (Addendum 9). The LDG discusses this document with the Nominee and both the Nominee and Group sign the document. This report is then sent to the Bishop.

Nomination for Ordination

- ❑ If it is the LDG's recommendation that the Nominee possesses qualities necessary for ordained ministry, he/she/they should request a meeting with the Bishop.
- ❑ If the Bishop chooses to invite the Nominee to meet the COM, the COM Chair will connect directly with the Nominee to provide details of the first meeting.
- ❑ If COM recommends that Nominee continue in the discernment process, the Bishop will arrange a two-month guided discernment exercise away from the Nominee's faith community to be completed before the second meeting with the COM.
- ❑ At the completion of the exercise, the Nominee will provide the Offices of the Bishop a completed Discernment Exercise Report as outlined in Addendum 10.
- ❑ Nominee requests the Psychological Packet (Addendum 11) from the Offices of the Bishop. After filling out the packet and turning into the Offices of the Bishop, the Nominee contacts the psychologist appointed by the diocese and schedules an appointment for the psychological evaluation. The Nominee's psychological evaluation must be completed and the report provided to the Offices of the Bishop prior to the second meeting with COM.
- ❑ The Nominee completes Safe Church training. (Must be renewed every three years.)
- ❑ The Nominee completes Anti-Racism Training.
- ❑ The Offices of the Bishop provides Nominee with the form to be completed for the medical examination and activates the required background check, both of which must be completed and paperwork sent to the Offices of the Bishop prior to the second meeting with COM. (See Addendum 12).
- ❑ After review of guided exercise reports, results from the psychological and medical examinations and background check, and in consultation with the COM Chair, the Bishop may invite the Nominee to the second COM meeting.
- ❑ At least one month prior to the second COM meeting, the Nominee submits an Application for Postulancy (Addendum 13).
- ❑ At least one month prior the second COM meeting, the Nominee's Vestry and Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon submit a Vestry Letter of Support for Postulancy (Addendum 14).

Postulancy for Priesthood

- ❑ The Bishop, following the second COM meeting, will inform the Nominee of the COM's recommendation (Addendum 15) and the Bishop's decision (Addendum 16). If the Nominee is recommended for Postulancy, Nominee submits Financial Assessment and Planning Guide for Nominees to Holy Orders (Addendum 17) to the Bishop.

- ❑ Postulants may choose to enroll in a seminary approved by the Bishop or an alternate course of education and formation as outlined by COM. (See Addendum 18)
- ❑ Field Education outside the local faith community is required and requirements will be communicated either through the seminary or through COEF.
- ❑ One unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at an accredited American Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) site is required (in some cases, CPE may be completed during Candidacy).
- ❑ Postulant submits Ember Day Letters to the Bishop four times per year until priestly ordination.

Candidacy for Holy Orders

- ❑ A Postulant may apply for Candidacy after successfully completing one half of his/her/their Seminary studies or approved course of study through COEF, and a minimum of approximately six months after being granted Postulancy. To request candidacy the Postulant submits the Application for Candidacy (Addendum 21). The request must include the date Postulancy was granted.
- ❑ The Vestry and Rector/Priest-in-Charge/Archdeacon and Senior Warden of the Postulant's faith community must submit Vestry Letter of Support for Candidacy (Addendum 22). In the absence of a Rector/Priest-in-Charge, the letter will be signed by the Regional Archdeacon.
- ❑ A Seminary Report of Progress/Committee on Ordination Education and Formation Mid-Study Report is submitted from the seminary or approved course of study related to the Postulant's suitability for Holy Orders, or a report from COEF (Addendum 19).
- ❑ Clinical Pastoral Education evaluation (Addendum 20) is submitted to the Offices of the Bishop.
- ❑ COM will review all requests for Candidacy and make their recommend to the Bishop and Standing Committee (Addendum 23).
- ❑ Standing Committee meets with Postulant and makes recommendation to the Bishop (Addendum 24).
- ❑ The Bishop may admit the Postulant as a Candidate (Addendum 25). If Candidacy is granted, and the Candidate is in the process for the Priesthood, the Offices of the Bishop registers the Candidate for the General Ordination Examination (GOE) (January) or locally administered Ordination Exam (Addendum 26) (time suitable).
- ❑ Each Candidate for Ordination shall continue to communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, human, spiritual and practical development, until ordination.

Ordination to the Diaconate for Vocational Deacons

- ❑ A Candidate for Ordination to the Diaconate may apply for Ordination one year (or at least six months after) being granted Candidacy and upon attainment of at least twenty- four years of age.
- ❑ The Offices of the Bishop supply necessary materials to the Standing Committee (Addenda 27 – 29, Evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy including dates, and updated background check and medical and psychological examinations if required.
- ❑ The Standing Committee certifies that required materials are in order and makes their recommendation to the Bishop. (Addendum 30)
- ❑ The Bishop informs the Candidate and the Candidate's Rector/Priest-in-Charge or Senior Warden and Archdeacon of his/her/their decision.
- ❑ The Bishop takes order for ordination to the diaconate (Addendum 31) sets the date for ordination.

Ordination to the Diaconate for those Called to the Priesthood

- ❑ A Candidate for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate may apply for Ordination one year (or at least six months) after being granted Candidacy and upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age.
- ❑ The Offices of the Bishop supply necessary materials to the Standing Committee (Addenda 32 – 34, Evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy including dates, and updated background check and medical and psychological examinations if required.
- ❑ The Standing Committee certifies that required materials are in order and makes their recommendation to the Bishop. (Addendum 35)
- ❑ The Bishop informs the Candidate and the Candidate's Rector/Priest-in-Charge or Senior Warden and Archdeacon of his/her/their decision.
- ❑ The Bishop takes order for ordination to the diaconate (Addendum 36) sets the date for ordination.

Ordination to the Priesthood

- ❑ A person may be ordained as a Priest at least six months after Ordination as a Transitional Deacon.
- ❑ The Offices of the Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide necessary materials to the Standing Committee (Addenda 37-39, evidence of the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy, Candidacy, and Ordination as a Deacon. The Bishop may require reports from other persons attesting to the readiness of the Deacon for Ordination to the Priesthood.)
- ❑ Upon review of the required documents, the Standing Committee makes their recommendation to the Bishop (Addendum 40).
- ❑ The Bishop informs the Deacon, takes order for ordination to the Priesthood (Addendum 41) and sets the date for ordination.

These steps are in compliance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, 2022.